

An interview with Earl Pike

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EARL PIKE

An Interview Conducted by

Martin Plascak

June 5, 1981

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June 5, 1981

DATE

NARRATOR DATA SHEET

Name of narrator: Earl Pike

Address: 690 Barbour Ave., Terre Haute, IN 47804
Phone: _____

Birthdate: 1899 Birthplace: Near Plainfield, Indiana

Length of residence in Terre Haute: _____

Education: Franklin College, 1918-22

Occupational history: High school coach, teacher and administrator.

Started at Clinton High School in 1922. Went to Garfield High
School in Terre Haute in 1923 from whence he retired in 1946.

Special interests, activities, etc. Sports

Major subject(s) of interview: High school sports, Garfield
High School, and school administration

No. of tapes: 2 Length of interview: _____

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Interviewing sessions:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Interviewer</u>
<u>06/05/81</u>		<u>Mr. Pike's residence</u>	<u>Martin Plascak</u>

8204475

EARL PIKE

Tape 1

June 5, 1981

Residence of Mr. Pike at 690 Barbour Avenue, Terre Haute, IN 47804

INTERVIEWER: Martin Plascak

TRANSCRIBER: Kathleen M. Skelly

For: Vigo County Oral History Program

SVCP 1981

MP: My name is Martin Plascak and this is an oral history project /interview/ with Earl Pike. The date is the 5th day of June, 2 o'clock in the afternoon. This interview is taking place in Mr. Pike's home which is located at 690 Barbour Avenue in Terre Haute. As of this date, Mr. Pike is 82 years old.

Mr. Pike, let's begin the interview today. I'd like to know something about your early background. Where were you born and raised?

PIKE: I was born in a little old log cabin a mile-and-a-half northeast of Plainfield, Indiana. And my family rented farms and moved around the city of Plainfield for about 10 or 12 years. I got back to Plainfield for schooling and graduated from high school there, and I was the first of our family to graduate. I have nine brothers and sisters, all of whom graduated from Plainfield High School. Four of those have been teachers or principals of schools, and one was a registrar and secretary for the superintendent of schools of Plainfield High School for a number of years.

MP: So, you graduated from Plainfield High School in what year?

PIKE: I graduated from Plainfield in 1918.

MP: Where'd you go from there?

PIKE: From there . . . I might just say after graduation my dad came to me and gave me a gold watch and said, "Earl, here's your watch." He says, "From now on, you're on your own. I've got a family to take care of and see that they get through school, and that's what I want to do. I think you can take care of yourself."

PIKE: So I started out and the first thing I knew I was in the S.A.T.C. at Franklin College. That was a rather interesting year because it was the year of the flu, and we had some peculiar things happen (chuckles) because of that. That's where I got started in athletics and teaching, "education."

MP: What were some of the peculiar things that happened?

PIKE: Well, one thing, the gymnasium had to be taken over for a hospital because of the number of boys that were taken down with the flu. And I was one on about the second day who was called up to serve as an orderly in the hospital. And fortunately for me, I didn't take the flu. And I was the only person in that whole outfit that didn't take sick or something. So, the second day came along and the doctor put me in charge of orderlies there in the hospital.

And then the third day was the same thing. So, I was on hospital duty for almost two weeks.

MP: And that was at Franklin College?

PIKE: At Franklin College.

MP: The year is?

PIKE: Nineteen /hundred/ eighteen. And while I'd get a little time off from the hospital duty, I would go out and sit on the steps of the gymnasium and watch the boys practicing football over on the football field. And one day I . . . after I'd been there about a week or so -- almost two weeks I guess -- I got up and I decided I'd take some exercise. I walked up and down the field and watched the boys play. All at once the football came bounding over across right in front of me, and I picked it up and threw it back into the field. I had good luck on the first pass I ever threw, and the coach turned around to another boy and says, "Who is that guy over there?" And some of the boys that

PIKE: knew me you know, told him who I was. That night I had a committee call on me at the fraternity house where we were quartered. And the next day the coach came over, got me out of the hospital (laughs) duties, and from then on I was on a football squad.

MP: Is that how you developed your interest in . . .

PIKE: That's . . .

MP: . . . first interest in college athletics?

PIKE: That's my . . . no, that wasn't my first interest, but it was my first in football.

MP: Who was the coach?

PIKE: John M. Thurber was the coach. He was the coach of football, basketball, baseball and track, as far as that goes.

And I started out working on and learning some football and I was pretty fortunate. The first football game that I ever saw I played fullback. I started at fullback and we had one play where we shifted a 220-pound tackle to the fullback to try and gain a yard or two when some of the rest of us couldn't do it. And I went into the line in his place. And when I got up there, one of the fellows that was at DePauw University . . . and I guess I told him I'd be coming to DePauw, but I didn't know anything about fraternities or anything of the kind. And when I stepped up in the line to play tackle for this fellow that went back in the backfield, the tackle on the opposite side -- the DePauw team -- looked over and he said, "Pike, you told me you were coming to DePauw. Here's where I get even with you!"

MP: (laughs)

PIKE: And I remembered the coach told me, he said, "Don't matter how big they are. If you hit 'em low

PIKE: and hit 'em hard, they're gonna come down." I thought, "Well, boy, if there's ever anybody gonna get hit hard as I can hit him, it'll be now." And I hit him and I took him out. And he just fell down right over me on my back. And he took ahold of my arm, picked me up, and said, "Thatta boy, Earl. You'll make a football player yet." (laughs)

MP: So, you played fullback on the Franklin College football team?

PIKE: Yeah. And that was my start. I was scared green when I went into the line and he told me that. But after that, he picked me up and all. And I said -- I remember I said -- "Thank you." And he turned out to be the athletic sportswriter of the Chicago Tribune /a few years later/.

MP: Do you know his name?

PIKE: I can't think of his name now. I did know it but I can't think of it now.

MP: Do you remember, while we're on the subject of football at Franklin College, any memorable game, any unusual incident?

PIKE: Well, I'll tell you the unusual incident that I got into the first week /of practice/. Now, I was fitted up and started in with the second team. Before the week was over I was shifted over to the first team bunch, and the quarterback on the first team was brought over to the second team. And somehow I broke through, got away, and I was running toward the goal line. And I got about 15, 20 yards to the goal line and just kinda let up, you know. About that time this quarterback . . . Nogle was his name; I never will forget it. He didn't let up. He kept on going. And all at once he hit me from behind, and I went down like so and went over /onto the ball/. I didn't know how to carry a football really, but it hit me right in the

PIKE: stomach and knocked the wind out of me and I saw stars (laughs) in all directions. And the coach came over, got hold of my arm, picked me up. Then in a little bit . . . after while he patted me on the shoulder and he said, "Now, Earl, when you get through the line and /are/ going toward the goal line, just don't you ever let up. /Go/ as hard as you can go 'til after you cross the goal line." That's one thing I never did forget. (laughs)

MP: What team were you playing that day?

PIKE: Well, it was just a practice game. /My first week out for football./

MP: Oh, practice game!

PIKE: Yeah. Um hm.

MP: We're going to be talking quite a bit about your athletic career a little bit later on. You say that you entered Franklin College on an S.A.T.C. What was that?

PIKE: Student Army Training Corps. And the Army had a unit there of about . . . close to 300 boys in there. And we just lasted from September to December the 23rd.

MP: Were you considered then a member of the United States Army . . .

PIKE: Yes.

MP: . . . while going to Franklin?

PIKE: I was a member of the United States Army. On the week before the armistice was signed, there were five of us boys who were selected to go to aviation school training. And then on . . . well, it was before Friday. But on Friday they called us in and told us our orders had been changed and was to be postponed for the time being and /that/ we'd be notified the first of the week of whether we'd go there or someplace else.

MP: So, in other words, you in 1918 then, you took part in a special program, this military program of Franklin College, I take it in lieu of being drafted or enlisting actually in the army?

PIKE: Well, I wanted to go to college. And I had a chance to get in The coach that was there then had been up to see me. He wanted me to come down to play basketball. I'd done pretty well in basketball. One of our boys that played with me three years had gone down to Franklin the year before. And he had talked me up somewhat, I guess, and the coach came up to see me in the early summer of '18. So that was how I came to go to Franklin . . . or from Plainfield to Franklin College instead of DePauw.

MP: So, even 'way back then here was a fellow out recruiting a good athlete.

PIKE: Well, you might say so, yes. But he didn't offer me anything only a chance (laughing) to go to school. But after I got down there, I tell you, I served as a night man in a garage. And another boy and I slept in a bank with a forty-four under our pillows (chuckles) as a guard for the bank down there. And then I finally got to the place where somebody had to be selected to serve as manager of the fraternity house -- the Phi Delta Theta fraternity. And they kind of gave me a break because I had, by that time, made the football team, and there was only one or I believe two other boys from the fraternity that were on the football squad. So they kind of wanted me to keep going, I guess, and they gave me this job. And I stayed there from then on 'til my senior year. I was manager of the fraternity house.

MP: Mr. Pike, what were your obligations under the military program at Franklin?

PIKE: Well, we organized just the same as any other army unit and had sergeants and corporals and all

PIKE: that. And we drilled and we'd go directly from there to a military service wherever needed. But it happened that the armistice was signed and /the unit/ broke up and the S.A.T.C. was done away with.

MP: Now, were you one of the five selected for aviation training?

PIKE: Yeah. I was one of those. I was the only freshman . . . no, there was another freshman but he had had military training in one of the Chicago schools.

MP: So, you were at Franklin College what years?

PIKE: Nineteen /hundred/ eighteen to 1922.

MP: You graduated in 1922.

PIKE: Yeah.

MP: And you told us about your football playing . . . some of your highlights there. Did you play basketball?

PIKE: (laughs)

MP: That's why you were recruited.

PIKE: Yeah. Well, I'll tell you. I did pretty well. I played four years of basketball and my first game I scored 22 points. And that was the high man of the game and that . . .

MP: Against whom?

PIKE: Against Hanover. And that gave me a start in basketball. And like in football, I played . . . after I got started, I played four years of football and four years of basketball, four of baseball, and two years on the track team.

MP: Lettered in each sport?

PIKE: Lettered. Four letters in three sports and two in the other.

MP: Earl, Franklin College . . . well, let me take that back. Franklin High School had a tremendous reputation in the early 1920s for basketball.

PIKE: Oh, they had a wonderful . . .

MP: The Franklin Wonder Five.

PIKE: That's right. And . . .

MP: I believe Ernest "Grizz" Wagner was the coach of that team.

PIKE: "Grizz" Wagner, yep.

MP: And they won the state championship three years in a row.

PIKE: Right.

MP: And one of the schools they beat in 1922 in the final game of the Indiana High School tournament was Garfield -- a school where you would be located . . .

PIKE: Two years later.

MP: Two years later.

PIKE: Yeah.

MP: Do you remember that game?

PIKE: I sure do!

MP: What do you remember about it?

PIKE: Well, I remember that Franklin was just a team like for Garfield. In other words, they had five

PIKE: fellows that were about like Babe Wheeler in working as a team and all. And Babe didn't have quite that much /help/. But they gave 'em a whale of a good game. And "Fuzzy" Vandever, Gant, the Friddle boys, and . . . King were the team. And then it was my pleasure and honor a few weeks later to work on the seniors of that /Franklin High/ bunch to get them into Franklin College. And . . .

MP: How'd that come about?

PIKE: Well, I had participated in a lot of things around the Franklin High School. Fact of the matter is I taught Sunday School class at First Baptist Church where this bunch of boys, as junior high boys, were in the class there and were on a basketball team. And they went right into high school, you might say. Four of those five went right into high school and carried on there. And then when they got through with high school . . . Now, Berl Friddle was the oldest one of the group. He came over to Franklin College in my senior year. He came when I was a senior. And the other four boys that graduated the next year and played against Garfield came over to Franklin College. And three of the four came into the Phi Delta Theta fraternity.

MP: And they attended Franklin College and then Franklin College had some very fine basketball teams.

PIKE: Oh, my, yes. They sure did. They had . . . I tell you they were one of the best passing teams. I still think they were the best passing team I ever saw. They were not particularly fast but they were accurate. Especially Vandever, who was a coach on the floor.

MP: Well, then you actually shared, it seems to me, in what a lot of people say is a glorious part of Indiana basketball history -- the three . . . the Franklin Wonder Five in high school and then the carryover into Franklin College.

PIKE: Yeah.

MP: That's considered a significant period in basketball history. Many of those players made the Indiana Basketball Hall of Fame.

PIKE: That's right. I remember "Fuzzy" Vandever went up for the National Hall of Fame, and I got a report about it and an invitation to go up for the initiation. But I couldn't go.

MP: Babe Wheeler you were speaking about of the Garfield high school team scored most of the points in that championship game. The final score was 26 to 15. He later, of course, became well-known here in this area, didn't he?

PIKE: In this area. He was a star at Purdue and he was one of the outstanding coaches of this area.

MP: At Brazil High School.

PIKE: Um hm. And "Fuzzy" Vandever. Now, there was one of the outstanding coaches in the Franklin area, you know.

MP: After you graduated from Franklin College in 1922, then you began your educational career as such, did you not? You went into the area -- the teaching area -- the area that you had majored in in college.

PIKE: Well, yes. That was a kind of interesting thing there.

One day when . . . I was interested in Eli Lilly and I thought I might go up there and get a job at Eli Lilly. I went up and found out that I wasn't going to get very much money if I went up there. I was working on an organic prep program in chemistry at Franklin. I was up in the laboratory by myself one day after school hours were really over. And all at once I looked up and there was the superintendent

PIKE: of schools from Clinton, /Indiana/ standing there watching me.

MP: Who was that?

PIKE: George McReynolds. And so I finally, . . . I said, "Mr. McReynolds, what are you doing down here?" He said, "Oh, I came down to see you and get you to come coach football for us up at Clinton next year." Well, I began to prick up my ears a little bit, as you might say. And before we got through, I agreed to come up /to Clinton/ and look over things and talk to him about it. So, that spring before school was out . . . my uncle lived in Clinton then, and I went up and spent a weekend with him, and, of course, I went over to see Mr. McReynolds and got acquainted with some of the boys. And one of the fellows who was a teacher at Clinton was a good friend of mine, and he started the word around with the high school kids that they were going to have me up there as a teacher next year. And he kind of built the program up a little bit. So, that spring when we came over to Terre Haute to play Indiana State in baseball, when we got off of the train, there was a whole bunch of kids out there. I didn't know any of them -- where they were from or anything of the kind. But I saw this friend of mine over there and I went over to talk to him. And then we all walked from the Pennsylvania station down to the college to play baseball.

Well, that afternoon when we played . . . when we got into the game, this bunch of fellows were high school teachers and students from Clinton who came down /to Terre Haute to see the game/. And they were down to see their prospective coach play baseball.

MP: You had your own rooting section.

PIKE: (laughs) I had a bigger rooting section than any of the rest of /the players/.

MP: Well, you went to Clinton High School then instead of Eli Lilly?

PIKE: Yeah.

MP: Did the job pay more money?

PIKE: Oh, yes! I got . . . for just the high school year of eight months plus -- 8 1/2 months /teaching/ up there at Clinton -- I got a salary of about, well, \$1650 to start off with /the first year/.

MP: So, you began your 43 years in education as a coach, teacher, and administrator at Clinton High School in the fall of 1922. And your first job was coach of the Clinton football team.

PIKE: Well, the first job was teacher of physical education you might say but what went with that was football. I had to start in with football. And there was only three lettermen left from the year before, and one of those was . . . oh, he was about six foot, two-inch end and a good one. I didn't know anything about /eligibility/ rules or /requirements/, you might say, then. I hadn't been studying it or anything of the kind and the principal wasn't too much on the beam either. So when I got ready to send my eligibility list to Central High School at Evansville, the principal came over to me and says, "Mr. Pike." He says, (laughs) oh, I can't think of his name now -- " . . . is not eligible. He isn't eligible to play."

MP: You can't think of the name of who it was?

PIKE: No, I can't think of his name now. Of course, he dropped out of school and never did return. But I was left with two boys -- one backfield and one lineman -- and all the rest of them were new. And we went down to Evansville, went down on the train. This friend of mine who was a teacher there was the athletic manager.

PIKE: He went with us. Well, he and I and the kids were the only ones that went /from Clinton/, you might say. And we got down there and we got beat, I believe it was 45 to nothing.

MP: By what school?

PIKE: By Central of Evansville. And . . .

MP: That was pretty classy opposition in those days.

PIKE: Yeah, it was (laughs) tough opposition. And so on the way back that night, this fellow and I . . . the boys were, oh, they were down in the dumps, you know. And we decided how we'd go /among them in the car/. We'd go in and visit with the kids, different ones, and try to pep 'em up a little bit and get 'em back to normal as near as we could because they were really blue. That's the first . . . of course, Clinton hadn't been used to losing all the time, you know.

So, the next game was with Georgetown. Georgetown was a national high school participant in the Pennsylvania area and all /American high school competition/.

MP: Georgetown, Illinois?

PIKE: Georgetown, Illinois. And they were really tough. I hadn't seen them or anything, but I had this fellow scout 'em and tell me about it. Then when we came back for the next /game/ that week, I got the boys out and we got together. We decided we could beat that team even though they were a national reputation -- type team. And we beat them 10 to 7. John Magnabosco was a freshman that year and he was playing fullback for us, and he threw a pass to one of the ends for a touchdown. And he kicked a field goal to make it 10 to 7.

And Clinton was always known for a bunch of fellows that bet, you know, on the games. And they

PIKE: were down on us for losing to Evansville the way we did. But we came back and a lot of them went the opposite way and bet against us (commences to laugh) the next week and then we won that game.

MP: And you upset Georgetown and won it?

PIKE: So, we upset Georgetown . . .

MP: Do you suppose a lot of money was lost in Clinton?

PIKE: Well, it was on the Evansville game, I think. I never did know, of course. Then they lost some more on Georgetown. From then on, we had . . . the community was with us.

MP: Did you have a winning season?

PIKE: Yeah. We had . . . we won 7 out of 9 games.

MP: Seven out of nine.

PIKE: Um hm.

MP: And the Johnnie Magnabosco that you're talking about later went on to bigger and better things and became very famous in football in Indiana.

PIKE: Yeah. He was football coach at Ball State Teachers College. And he was coach back at Clinton for a while. He was a good baseball player and pretty fair basketball player.

MP: It's interesting that you said that your first job at Clinton High School you were hired as a physical education teacher . . .

PIKE: Yeah.

MP: . . . and coaching was an extra duty, I take it?

PIKE: More or less, yes.

MP: So, you coached football that fall and then did you coach basketball?

PIKE: Coached basketball. We didn't do . . .

MP: How were you in basketball?

PIKE: We didn't do quite so well in basketball. I think we won four or five games, but we didn't have a very strong team. But we did all right.

MP: Then, what did you do in the spring, coach track?

PIKE: Well, I started track. They didn't have track the year before. And I got two or three boys that were pretty good at track, and we got into the county track meet and scored some points. After we got a football field started there at Clinton and a track around it, then the next few years Clinton had football and track both.

MP: So, your tenure at Clinton High School consisted of physical education activities and coaching?

PIKE: Yeah. Physical education was grade school through high school.

MP: Uh huh. Those of us who follow sports know that the history, particularly of Clinton High School football, has been outstanding for a number of years. Was the reputation there in football when you arrived or did you start it?

PIKE: Oh, it was already there. The year before a fellow named Morgan was coach, and they had a very good team. But they were all seniors, you might say, but two or three. I started out with a bunch of freshmen who later on became, you might say, state champions.

MP: Yes. Who coached that state champion? Spike Kelly?

PIKE: Paul "Spike" Kelly.

MP: So, you left him a nucleus, really, of a team that later was to go on to win the state championship. What year would that be?

PIKE: That was 1924, '25 . . . '26.

MP: These were your boys your first year.

PIKE: Uh-huh. And they were in . . .

MP: Who were some of those boys that . . .

PIKE: Well, Adolph Stickle was a speed merchant and a little fellow. I can't tell you all these stories but the superintendent came out one day, and he didn't think I ought to use this little boy playing end. So, he was going to help out and he'd play on the second team. So (commences to laugh) I put him on Stickle. I asked him /the superintendent/ to take tackle over in front of this kid, you know. Before long he says, "I gotta get back to the office, Mr. Pike." And he never did mention that kid any more, because he was good and he played good all the rest of the years.

And on the other end was Tony Lahti who was a real good one. Then I had Andy Graham that made All-Valley . . . or not Andy. What was his name -- Andy Graham was one down here. But this boy was a real good halfback. And in his senior year they had the tops up there at Clinton.

MP: Won the state championship, didn't they?

PIKE: Yeah. Now I'd like to mention one other thing that I was always so proud of. The next year Clinton came down to Terre Haute to play Garfield. This bunch

PIKE: of kids were all members of the team that I'd had the year before, every one of 'em. When they got down here, they were out on the field and practiced a while and we were practicing, too. And I was just . . . I knew that we didn't have a chance with them, because I knew the ability of that bunch of boys. And just a while before the game was to start, the whole Clinton squad just came over, went right over to the Garfield bench. I was over there. They came over and talked to me, you know, and I shook hands with the boys. And we just had a nice little visit there and they told me, they were sure glad to get to play against my team down here. But they assured me that they wouldn't let up because I'd been their coach before, but they were going to say they'd do the best they could. And I said, "Well, my boys will do the best they can, too, so we'll have a good clean ball game."

MP: How'd it come out?

PIKE: And it was a good ball game and they beat us -- I've forgotten now -- 26 to 6, I believe, something like that.

MP: You were at Clinton High School then from the fall of 1922 until . . .

PIKE: The next spring. I was just there one year.

MP: 'Twenty-three. How'd it happen then from Clinton you went to Garfield in Terre Haute? How'd it happen you left Clinton to go to Garfield?

PIKE: Oh, ha, that's another story!

Well, in the years I was at Franklin College Birch Bayh was athletic director and coach at Indiana State.

MP: That's the father of the . . .

PIKE: Father of the . . . my good . . . you know.

MP: . . . Birch Bayh, United States/ senator (1963-1981).

PIKE: Well, he was made director of physical education and athletics at the Terre Haute city schools in 1923, or '22 maybe it was. And he and I had been more or less friends -- and enemies, too. We went to the YMCA conference at Lake Geneva. And he and I organized the Indiana delegates/ athletic teams up there, and we won the championship up there that year with baseball and track. Birch and I scored quite a few points in each case. And in baseball, he was the catcher and I was the pitcher. And we didn't lose a game. We played four games and won all four of them, so that we won the conference championship.

Well, then the next year I went to Clinton and he came to the city schools. And then when the year was over, I'd signed a contract to come back to Clinton with Mr. McReynolds. But Mr. Bayh decided he'd like to have me come to Terre Haute. And he went up to Clinton and talked with Mr. McReynolds and told him what he wanted to do and asked for his permission to call me, as I was over at the University of Illinois in a coaching school -- physical ed program over there, under Coach Bob Zupke and I've forgot some of the other fellows. But I was taking some coaching training and physical education classes. Birch came back down here to Terre Haute and called me over at Champaign and told me what he'd done. I told him, "Well, I can't do that." I said, "I've already signed a contract to go to Clinton next year." He said, "Oh, I know you have. I've already talked to Mr. McReynolds and got his permission for you to get a release and come here if you would like to do so." So, of course, I knew Birch real well and I thought he was a fine fellow to work with and all. And so I went back to the fraternity house where I roomed, after classes that day and called Mr. McReynolds and told him what I'd

PIKE: heard from Birch. And he says, "Yes, Mr. Bayh and I have been talking and I figured that if you could get a job in Terre Haute, it would be an advancement for you and I wouldn't stand in your way if you wanted to go."

MP: What did Mr. Bayh want you to do?

PIKE: Well, he wanted me to come down and take the physical education and coaching in either Garfield or Wiley. They had openings in both schools.

MP: Did you have a choice?

PIKE: Well, no, because the principals made the choice.

MP: And who was the principal at Garfield that I guess chose you?

PIKE: Charles Zimmerman.

MP: Mr. Zimmerman.

PIKE: He had been the principal at Clinton before he came to Garfield. So, I guess that he chose me as he knew me and he didn't know the other fellow. The other fellow was a wonderfully fine fellow 'cause he was Pete Phillips. And you know Pete Phillips was an outstanding athlete at Indiana University in track and basketball and came here as a coach and teacher in physical education at Wiley the same year as I went to Garfield in 1923.

MP: O.K. So, Mr. Zimmerman then put in a plug for you with Birch Bayh and you ended up at Garfield?

PIKE: Ended up at Garfield.

MP: What kind of a person was Birch Bayh, Sr.?

PIKE: Oh, he was one of these fellows that could . . .

PIKE: always had something to say and a glad hand and everything. You couldn't out-talk him. (laughs) Well, some people didn't like him, because he had a tendency to take advantage a lot of times in some things but not too much so, I didn't think. But he was a worker and was one of the best basketball officials in the state of Indiana. And in fact he refereed the Indiana State tournament, I think four times.

MP: So, you were hired at Garfield High School in the fall of 1923, and you were at Garfield from 1923 until . . .

PIKE: Nineteen /hundred/ forty-six.

MP: 'Forty-six. So, we're talking about 23 years at Garfield High School, which is not very far from your home. Used to be, I should say. (laughs) There's no school there any more.

PIKE: Well, when I came here . . . another funny thing. Pete Phillips and I /had/ played basketball and baseball and track against one another in high school. He was from Amo, Indiana. Do you know where that is?

MP: Near Plainfield.

PIKE: Well, it's this side of Plainfield about 20 miles, 18 maybe. And we knew each other real well and he was a year ahead of me. He graduated one year ahead of me. And the year that he was a senior at Amo, Amo walloped Plainfield for the district championship in basketball. And the next year it came back. And we /Plainfield/ went to DePauw U. at Greencastle and we beat them in the final game of the sectional tournament to get to go to Indiana University for the state tournament.

MP: Well, you and Phillips, both of whom came to Terre Haute at the same time, were friendly rivals . . .

PIKE: Yeah.

MP: That's interesting.

PIKE: Well, now, I'll tell you . . . let me tell you one other thing.

We ended up rooming together. He was the assistant football coach at Wiley and I was the assistant at Garfield then, because E. Bernard Clogston -- that's the fellow that was coach the year or two before -- was made head coach. I was his assistant football coach. But he only coached one year, and then I took over as head coach from then on to 1942.

MP: So, at Garfield High School in 23 years beginning with the fall of 1923, you worked . . . what were your positions at Garfield?

PIKE: At Garfield? Well, at Garfield I started out with physical education. And then I had health. I taught health and driver training, and then in 1933 (I think it was) I was changed from physical education to chemistry. And I taught chemistry then until 1946. And Jim Conover had the physical ed then for the boys. And then I . . . let's see. Chemistry . . . a few years later when . . . who was it? Jim Conover was . . . I was track coach and basketball and . . . oh, Willard Kehrt took over basketball. And then I was made dean of boys in about '39 or '40 -- I've forgotten now just which it was -- and stayed as dean of boys and chemistry for the rest of the time at Garfield. And then in '46 I retired and went -- well, I didn't retire, I was through teaching and went down to the city school - to the city school office with Mr. Watson, as assistant superintendent.

MP: Out at Garfield then your coaching duties were one of those in addition to teaching.

PIKE: Yes.

MP: You coached what at Garfield? Football?

PIKE: I coached football, assisted . . . truthfully speaking, I coached two years of basketball to start with. My first year, I was head basketball coach and assistant football coach. My second year, I was football coach and basketball coach. In my third year, I was football coach and assistant basketball coach and assistant track. Jim was track coach and I was his assistant. And, well, one other thing . . . we had baseball in those days. And I was the baseball coach. Three years we had baseball /at Garfield/ there. Couldn't make money ends meet so that did away with baseball for a number of years. It finally came back /and is doing real well/.

MP: Was football the significant sport?

PIKE: Oh, yes. Football.

MP: You coached football then 2 years at Garfield.

PIKE: Um hm.

MP: I don't know the record for all of those years. I don't suppose . . . you don't have a total won-and-loss record?

PIKE: No. But we had a better win record than loss.

MP: Well, let me put it this way. I do know in searching the records that your 1935 Garfield team was undefeated, unbeaten and untied, was it not?

PIKE: Tied, I believe, once.

MP: Tied. But it was . . . didn't lose a ball game.

PIKE: Didn't lose a ball game and we won /The/ Wabash Valley championship that year.

MP: Nineteen /hundred/ thirty-five.

Who were some of the players on that team?

PIKE: Well, there was Bob Smith, who became a good quarterback a little later. John Schmidt was, in my opinion, one of the best quarterbacks that anybody ever /coached in high school/.

MP: Is that the John Schmidt that we know?

PIKE: No. No. He died in Phoenix, Arizona, about three years ago. He had bad health, left Terre Haute and went out there. Adolph Schmidt was his real name. And he was to the football team as "Fuzzy" Vandever was to the Franklin basketball team.

MP: Real spark plug.

PIKE: He was a spark plug and he was a student of the game. And that team, we had a reputation of being a power team. But when we figured out how we scored our touchdowns, we scored more points by passes than we did from power plays.

MP: That's a little unusual because back in that time football was a running game then. It wasn't . . .

PIKE: Yeah.

MP: . . . too much passing like today.

PIKE: Um hm. Well, that's what I was going to say was the reason I say he was one of the top boys.

MP: Who were some of the other players on the team?

PIKE: Well, let's see. There was Bob Smith and Rex Herbert. Rex Herbert was halfback and he was an excellent one. And there was Bill Fegley, an outstanding end, and Hackler was the other end. And we

PIKE: had John Burke who lives here in the north end still. He works for the sign company here. And let's see, /Howard/ Cline and Burke and "Red" Jones played center and . . . gosh, I can see some of those, but I can't think of their names right now.

MP: These are some of the boys you're talking about on the 1935 team. But through all of the years you coached at Garfield in 22 years you had, I take it, a lot of . . .

PIKE: Oh, my!

MP: You coached a lot of boys, didn't you?

PIKE: A lot of boys, yes, indeed.

MP: Earl, I wanted to ask you, how back in those coaching days -- and I guess it also pertains to your experience at Clinton -- how did teams travel in those days? How'd you get around? You certainly didn't have the cars or the vehicles we have today. How'd you get around?

PIKE: Well, generally speaking, in my first two or three years of coaching, we traveled by train /or interurban/. Took a train from, for instance, to Chicago /and Evansville/. We played Lindbloom in Chicago and we went to Wait High of Toledo. /We/ took a train, of course, on those trips. We used to go to Robinson /Illinois/ on the train, go down to Sullivan on the interurban and transfer over to the train and go over to Robinson on the train. And then the next year we used the Clinton Riccardo Stages bus for transportation.

END OF SIDE 1

TAPE 1-SIDE 2

MP: You were saying that you used the Clinton . . .

PIKE: The Clinton bus company was Riccardo Stages.

MP: They were in Terre Haute?

PIKE: No, they were . . .

MP: In Clinton?

PIKE: The Stages at Clinton but they ran the bus line from here to Clinton. And they had a real good service. And I had got acquainted with one of the boys that drove for them and I got him to come take us on the trips. And it wasn't long 'til he was as much a Garfield boy as he ever was Clinton, you might say. And he'd be down here and help the boys get their equipment on and all and he just took care of us, you might say.

MP: So, on your team trips to play games you traveled by train and by bus and the same holds true when you were at Garfield all those years?

PIKE: Yeah. At Garfield, too.

MP: Was there any transportation problem at all?

PIKE: Well, there was a problem once in a while that we had trouble; but we had the use of the Terre Haute bus, city line bus, a few times. I remember one time we went to Midland . . . or to . . . down south here of Jacksonville. What's that?

MP: Jacksonville and then Midland.

PIKE: Midland. Well, we played Midland down there one time, and we went down there and we were going on the city bus. And the driver lost control of the bus and went over the edge of a bridge and just slid right along on the curb . . . or the wing of that bridge. And here the bus /set7. He couldn't get off, back off

PIKE: or anything. And we boys got down and walked from there on down to Jasonville. And there was a fellow that came along with a load of tomatoes, taking them in to the canning factory /at Jasonville/. He had the boys put their /luggage/ . . . they were carrying their uniforms you know and everything in their football pants, and he had the boys put 'em on the wagon. And he hauled 'em (commences to laugh) down to Jasonville.

MP: When was this, do you remember?

PIKE: Oh, I can't remember for sure.

MP: Was it during the basketball or football season?

PIKE: Football season.

MP: Football season?

PIKE: Yeah. We were going down there in the morning and we had arrangements made for lunch at Jasonville. We got down to Jasonville and then we called back to Terre Haute, and they sent another bus out to take us on over to /Midland/.

MP: So you had leased a city bus from Terre Haute?

PIKE: Yeah. We had just rented or hired them to take us on a trip. They took us on several trips but not anything like the Clinton bus, because Clinton was a different type bus and different setup. And they had a driver that was used to driving out in the country instead of one that just drove right here in the city.

MP: I was a little interested in this accident that you had down there. The bus I take it then became immobile?

PIKE: It was immobile because it was resting on the axel on the coping of this bridge.

MP: Well, when it happened then your boys . . . you and the boys walked to Jasonville.

PIKE: We walked on down to Jasonville.

MP: How far was that?

PIKE: Oh, must have been . . . I'd say a mile-and-a-half or so, two miles maybe.

MP: Then how'd you get to your site at Midland?

PIKE: Oh, why we called back to Terre Haute and they sent out another bus to take us on over there.

MP: So obviously, the game was played but it was a delayed starting time then?

PIKE: Well, it wasn't delayed very much but we won the game easily. I remember that. Played out, more or less, in a cornfield. (laughs)

MP: So, transportation was mostly by bus and . . .

PIKE: Yeah.

MP: For the teams. Well, how did the students . . . did they have any transportation problem? Was it difficult for them to get to school? In this day and age, there's a lot of school busing, as you know.

PIKE: Yeah. Well, in those days walking was common. The boys and girls walked to school for miles. I know I walked from the country a mile-and-a-half to my school every day when I was there. And that was the way with a lot of the kids around here in Garfield. They walked to school. And then, of course, some of them had bicycles. They had a row of bicycles . . . a lot of bicycles at Garfield all the time. And then they got to the place where boys began to have a car every once in a while and a boy . . .

MP: I think that was in the later years.

PIKE: Yeah, that was . . . well, that was more or less when I was dean of boys in the last years. (laughs)

MP: Did that pose any problems?

PIKE: Some problems, yeah.

MP: What kind of problems?

PIKE: Oh, once in a while they wouldn't get to school on time and would be stopping on the way or going somewhere else and coming up with a story every now and then about why they . . . One case I remember a boy told me he was out at the gas station on 25th Street, and he wouldn't be able to get to school that day because he was having trouble with his car. I let it go for a while and after a while I called out to the gas station. And the man . . . I asked one of the boys there whom I knew if there was a fellow there by that name that had a car there being worked on. "No, nobody (commences to laugh) here by that name." But he got word somehow that I'd caught up with him and when he came back to school the next day, he was ready for whatever was to be.

MP: You went to Garfield in the fall of 1923.

PIKE: Yes.

MP: Garfield was a relatively new school then, was it not?

PIKE: Well, Garfield was opened in 1912.

MP: Nineteen /hundred/ twelve. Well, it was 11 years old then.

PIKE: Um hm.

MP: What was Garfield like in those days?

PIKE: Well, I'll tell you Garfield was a big community center. And the faculty and the kids were just a big family that was working together and having a good time and doing a good job. And they all worked to help one another. And the community seemed to appreciate the attitude of the students and the teachers and all. And one thing the teachers did over there that they don't do any more, they put on a class play every year for the . . .

MP: The teachers?

PIKE: The teachers for the kids and the community. And they had the auditorium full, two nights -- each night they put on the performance.

MP: What was the purpose of that?

PIKE: Just to be part of the group, the community.

MP: So, there was a closeness there?

PIKE: There was a closeness that isn't there any more.

MP: Well, of course, the school isn't there any more. You mean that doesn't exist any more?

PIKE: Doesn't exist.

MP: But let me ask you this. Was that situation any more prevalent or any more unusual, that closeness at Garfield with the students and the faculty and the community, than Gerstmeyer or Wiley?

PIKE: Well, I couldn't say exactly, but I have a feeling that it was. Because Garfield was built at a time when the city of Terre Haute wanted to keep one school, you might say. And they felt like they had Wiley, and it

PIKE: was at the center of the city and it could take care of everybody.

But a committee of men and women got together and decided that they were going to try to get a school in the north end. They started in 1909 and they finally got the school in 1912. And the first year the school opened with over 300 students, and Wiley, instead of losing 300 students as they predicted that they would, only lost about 130, because more kids came and went. And most of these kids coming up here to Garfield were students that didn't even go to school the year before. They said it was too far to go and too much difficulty. Didn't have the expense . . . the money to go on trips or to school.

MP: When you talk about the closeness of the community at Garfield, are you talking about the community as a whole or what many of us know as the Twelve Points community?

PIKE: Well, I would say the community as a whole, but the Twelve Points community was the center of it, of course. And the school centered around the Twelve Points thing. But the community took in people all around here. There /are/ even a few people from the south side came up here and participated in this community activity and . . .

MP: How'd they get here?

PIKE: Heh? Well, I don't know how they got here, but I remember when the school was being built, there was one or two men from the south end that came up here and were very active in getting the school built.

MP: What was Twelve Points like then?

PIKE: Well, Twelve Points . . .

MP: Twelve Points today and Twelve Points then?

PIKE: Well, Twelve Points . . . I'll say it this way -- that /on/ Maple Avenue and Lafayette Avenue and 13th Street were stores and activities of various kinds from . . . far away from the center of where the Twelve Points area centered. And people would be in the area. In other words, they came to this area for their trading instead of going downtown like most people do nowadays. But they had a number of very active and good stores, and the people that were in the stores here were very good boosters of Garfield so they kept things going pretty well for Garfield. And the kids were pretty good and active; only once in a while they'd go over to the pool room and (commences to laugh) . . .

MP: So was Twelve Points a busy place?

PIKE: Twelve Points was a very busy place in those days.

MP: You had shopping in the stores and . . .

PIKE: Oh, yeah, there's . . .

MP: Theaters?

PIKE: They had . . . let's see, one, two . . . two or three theaters and stores all around the center here for, well, say two blocks . . . or one block east of 13th Street to Garfield High School was the store area, and on Lafayette from the crossing up there at Lafayette and 13th Street. And it went on even beyond that and back down to McLean Junior High School.

MP: That was considered the Garfield district?

PIKE: That was . . . no, that wasn't the district. The district was a lot larger than that, but that was the center of it, you might say.

MP: What were some hang outs in Garfield or places where the young people congregated?

PIKE: Well, yes, I suppose there were. There were I know. As dean of boys, I had occasions to go over and pick up some boys that were loafing in the pool room over there and the drugstore. But West's drugstore, which was the main drugstore there . . . he wouldn't allow them to stay in there when they . . .

MP: During school hours.

PIKE: During school hours.

MP: Mr. Pike, when you came to Terre Haute in the early '20s -- and, of course, you'd been to Terre Haute prior to then from your experiences at Franklin -- what kind of a community do you remember this as being? What kind of a city was it?

PIKE: Well, I thought Terre Haute was a real nice city. I was glad to get to come here to tell the truth about it, because I'd gotten acquainted with it through Birch Bayh and my uncle who lived in Clinton. And this was a . . . to me in those days, it was a big city. But it wasn't anyways near as big as it seems now. But I was well pleased with the situation, and the people were very helpful to help you get along. For instance, when I came here . . . I told you about Pete Phillips and I rooming together. We came into town, neither one of us knew anything about anybody. But Miss Huff, who was the secretary to the superintendent of schools then, talked to me that day. She says, "Where you going to stay, Earl?" And I told her, I said, "Well, I don't know. I've got to find a place." She says, "Well, I have a room." And she says, "I have room for two boys up there and I'd be glad to have you come." She said, "Could you and Mr. Phillips probably come up and room at my house?" I said, "Well, I'll see about that. I think maybe we could."

PIKE: So, the next day we were up at her house and moved in and I lived there for four weeks. And then he /Pete/ got married and I got a house . . . a room at 913 Maple Avenue and I lived there for 13 years until I got married.

MP: What do you remember about the early years about the downtown area?

PIKE: Downtown Terre Haute area was . . . the setup was very much as it is today with the old Terre Haute House. And that was the hang out place for the college boys and a few high school boys and a lot of the young men would go in there. There was a pool room back in there. There was always a gang in there. Jake Maehling and I would go down there every once in a while. And they had the Goodie Shop . . . not the Goodie Shop on South 7th Street there. I can't think of the name of it now. It was on the east side.

MP: Was there a cafeteria in there?

PIKE: Yeah. And that was a very prominent place, also. The Goodie Shop a block south of Wabash was a place where a lot of people went to eat and visit.

MP: So, you remembered . . . was downtown a busy place?

PIKE: Very busy place.

MP: What do you remember about the transportation system then -- how people moved about?

PIKE: Well, I tell you. The first year . . . the first year I was here we rode back and forth from Twelve Points to downtown in a jitney. Fellows . . .

MP: Tell me about it.

PIKE: Fellows had open Fords, you might say. And they would pick up anybody that wanted to ride as long as

PIKE: they could hang on. Why you'd get on, have a nickel in your pocket; why you could ride downtown. And they'd take you downtown, bring you back to Twelve Points. And then they had the streetcar and the streetcar came up 8th Street to Collett Park, and you'd take that Collett Park streetcar to downtown, and you'd transfer and go anyplace you wanted to on the streetcar. But that soon fizzled out and the buses came about.

MP: Do you remember the interurbans?

PIKE: Oh, yes. I came . . . that was my way of traveling from home. I came from Plainfield to Terre Haute on the interurban and up to Clinton /in 1922/.

MP: On Highway 40.

PIKE: Well, it was right along Highway 40. But we'd come through Pecksburg, Coatsville, Amo, Fillmore, Brazil . . . (chuckles) what was the next?

MP: All of these were interurban stops?

PIKE: Interurban stops. (laughs)

MP: Mr. Pike, let me ask you this. We've gotten your impressions, especially in the early '20s -- you came here in '23 -- of what Garfield was like, Twelve Points was like, Terre Haute was like. What was your impression, what was the Terre Haute city school system as a whole like?

PIKE: Well, the Terre Haute city school system I thought was real good. I got a good introduction to the Terre Haute system when I first came here and then . . . Well, through Birch Bayh, you might say, I got my start here. The superintendent of schools -- Grosjean I think was his name -- and . . . no, Grosjean was assistant superintendent . . .

MP: Would that be George Carroll?

PIKE: No, George Carroll came after I did.

Hmp. Tiley? Was that Tiley? Anyway, I got a very good introduction to the Terre . . .

MP: How so? What do you mean you got a good introduction?

PIKE: Well, they gave me a good start, you might say, in getting acquainted with people and helped me to find a place to stay and gave me more or less a chance to choose where I wanted to go, but told me that the principals were going to get the job in the end. And, of course, I knew Mr. /Charles/ Zimmerman because I had met him before he left Clinton even.

MP: Mr. Zimmerman was the principal at Garfield High School when you came here?

PIKE: Yeah. And he was principal at Clinton for two years before you know.

MP: Did you have . . . when you worked here in Terre Haute since the man, I guess, most responsible for bringing you here was Birch Bayh, Sr. . . .

PIKE: Right.

MP: . . . did . . . he was the physical education director for the . . .

PIKE: For the city schools.

MP: Did you work then closely with him? Or did he just sit in the central office and direct activities?

PIKE: Well, he was in the central office and directing activities really. We worked through the principals more than through him because he . . . well, he didn't have quite the say of what we did and all as they do now. Although he was responsible and the fellow

PIKE: /physical education director/ that was here before him was responsible for getting Garfield on a terribly tough schedule. With /most of the 1922-23 basketball/ team graduating in basketball I /the coach/ had that /schedule to face/ the next year. We played . . . let's see. We played Richmond, we played Champaign, we played /Shortridge, Vincennes, and/ Evansville /schools/ and /some/ other top teams. We played four or five top teams that we really didn't have any business (chuckles) playing. But . . .

MP: Who was responsible for drawing up that schedule?

PIKE: Well, the fellow who Birch Bayh replaced was responsible for it. He wanted to get out and get Garfield /state recognition. Garfield had played in the final game of the Indiana High School Tourney, 1923, so he had a good chance to schedule some top teams, and did so.

MP: And how'd that go over?

PIKE: It didn't go over very well.

MP: Is it because you just didn't have the talent?

PIKE: Didn't have the team. We had . . . in two years I had it and developed a very good team. The second year we won the sectional tournament here -- in my second year as coach and my final year as head coach of basketball. But I had the good fortune and the bad luck of meeting Glen Curtis and his Martinsville team who were state (commences to laugh) champions. Glen Curtis had been my coach in my sophomore year in high school.

MP: Is that right?

PIKE: Yeah.

MP: Well, that's interesting because, of course, Glen Curtis coached even Johnny Wooden at Martinsville.

PIKE: Yeah. Well, that's right.

MP: And later . . . later he was head coach at Indiana State Teachers College.

PIKE: Yeah.

MP: And, of course, is a member now of the Indiana Basketball Hall of Fame -- a very revered name in high school basketball.

PIKE: Oh, yeah. And I lived in the country. He had a room in the hotel there in Plainfield. And when we'd go on trips, we'd go out by . . . if we went very far, we went by interurban usually or train. If /we had/ a late return, he'd take me up to his room and I'd stay overnight so I wouldn't have to walk out home in the middle of the night. Otherwise, I'd have to walk home because we didn't have transportation.
(laughing)

MP: Well, when Glen Curtis then, of course, came to Terre Haute, I take it you were a good friend of his at Indiana State Teachers College?

PIKE: Yes. Fact of the matter is, he roomed here at my house one summer.

MP: Here?

PIKE: Yeah. He took over while I was working in a boys' camp in Wisconsin.

MP: In the 23 years that you spent at Garfield, were there any particular problems developed?

PIKE: Well, no real problems as it seemed. I tell you I wish I could get along, that things would go along as well nowadays as they did for us then. But the problem -- the big problem -- in those days was finance for operating athletic programs.

MP: Is that . . . that's somewhat of a problem yet today, isn't it?

PIKE: Yes, it is. But in those days football was the only thing that made any money and basketball . . . one thing about basketball, we had to go from Garfield down to Wiley to practice and we always had to practice at night. Well, that was expensive because we paid the kids' transportation fare down there if they had to go down on streetcar or taxi.

MP: Garfield had no gymnasium?

PIKE: Garfield had what they called a shoebox. It was 30 by 54 feet. And that was where they had physical education and basketball /in those days/.

MP: It was not . . .

PIKE: And it was down in a pit, brick wall all the way around.

MP: Where was it located?

PIKE: In the basement of Garfield High School.

MP: In the basement.

PIKE: Uh-huh.

MP: And so you did all your basketball practice at Wiley?

PIKE: Well, we practiced in the gym a lot . . . in the gym all we could.

MP: And so you paid the fare for the youngsters to go to Wiley to practice if they rode the streetcar?

PIKE: Yeah, they rode the streetcar or some of them would get together and dads would take 'em down. Or

PIKE: they'd meet with some of us coaches and go down with us.

MP: Were those pretty (laughing) trying times?

PIKE: That was a trying time, I'll tell you.

MP: When was the Garfield gym built?

PIKE: Garfield gym was built when . . . let's see. Mr. Zimmerman was there. Gosh! I can't tell you the year now. I can't remember dates and names. /It was in the early 30s/.

MP: Well, I think you've done a pretty good job.

I wanted to ask you, do you have any recollections . . . of course, back in those days -- as a matter of fact up until the early '60s -- there were two school systems here; what we called Terre Haute and Vigo County districts.

PIKE: Terre Haute and Vigo County.

MP: What are your recollections of that school system of the county? Did you have any association with it?

PIKE: Well, the association that I had was really the men that I knew and met /who were/ the principals and the coaches in the various schools. And we worked together quite a lot in helping out one another, even though they were one system and we were another. For instance, Orville Jones and I got to be /a/ pretty fair official team. And the county schools and Rockville and Robinson and Wabash Valley area schools got to asking us to come to officiate their games as much as we could. And we got acquainted with all the principals, you might say, that way.

MP: So you officiated, too?

PIKE: Yeah, I officiated from 1924 'til 1938, I guess
-- '37 or '38.

MP: I notice that . . . or have read that many of
the people associated with athletics at that time in
the school system -- coaches and I've known several --
apparently as an aside they officiated. Was that be-
cause of their interest in the sport or was it a way
to make an extra income?

PIKE: Well, it was a way to get a little income and at
the same time, we usually were among the few that knew
the game well enough to do a pretty fair job as
officials. For instance, I coached football and
refereed basketball. Well, yeah, I refereed but usual-
ly umpired football. When I officiated, often I worked
with Birch Bayh. He was a referee and I was an umpire.

I remember another one of those things that hap-
pened. I went over to scout Marshall, Illinois. We
were going to play Marshall, Illinois, the next week
and I went over to scout them on Saturday -- a game
they had over there Saturday night. Got over there,
and after while . . . nobody came out or anything and
after while here came Phil Brown, the coach at Marshall
High at that time, and . . . let's see . . . who was
the other fellow? I knew him real well. /Come/ over
to me. He, this other fellow had seen me and I'd
talked to him before /he went inside to dress as/ he
was going to officiate. I knew him very well. Ped
Huffman was his name. And . . .

MP: Ped Huffman?

PIKE: Ped.

MP: P-e-d?

PIKE. Ped, yeah. Pleasant Huffman was his real name.
And he and I had been students in Franklin together.
He was a Phi Delt and I was a Phi Delt so we knew one

PIKE: another. He was the basketball coach down at . . . oh, over here in Illinois - down south on the Wabash River.

MP: Vincennes?

PIKE: No, this side of Vincennes. Across the . . . the first big bridge across the river there /near Merom/.

MP: Hutsonville.

PIKE: Hutsonville! He was the coach and math teacher at Hutsonville. And, well, they came out, he and the coach, you know. And Phil says, "Hi, Earl! How you feeling today?" [I replied,] "Oh, I'm fine. I . . ." He says, "Well, I just wondered if you were feeling like refereeing this football game?" I said, "I didn't come over here to referee a game. I came over here to watch your team play." He says, "I know that but I'd rather have you out there on the field." And I said, "Now, Phil, what's the matter?" He says Dietrich and Duttonhaver -- two fellows that played football with him in Indianapolis at Butler University -- were supposed to come over to be officials that day. And they got picked up for speeding in Indianapolis (commences to laugh) and never did get there.

Well, here was Ped Huffman and I and (laughs) . . . Finally I told them, I want to help you out as much as I can, but you understand I came over here to scout the game. He says, "I know it, but you can't do as good a job of scouting when you're out there refereeing as you could on . . ." "Well, I suppose I couldn't but I don't think I would because I'd try to do a good job." He says, "That's what I know." And he says, "I want you to be one of my officials today."

MP: The Phil Brown that you're talking about, is he the fellow that later became the coach at Rose Poly?

PIKE: Yeah.

MP. Now, Rose-Hulman.

PIKE: Yeah. And my son played football for him the year they went through with an undefeated season.

MP: Is that right?

PIKE: Um hm.

MP: Is that the team that also had Eddie McGovern and . . .

PIKE: Yeah.

MP: Earl, who are some of the names that stick out in your mind in the 23 years at Garfield High School, faculty or . . .

PIKE: Well, let me tell you . . . the faculty, of course. The first one is Zimmerman. Then there's J.J. Maehling, who is principal . . . that went from chemistry teacher at Garfield to Woodrow Wilson as principal. That's when I became chemistry teacher at Garfield. And there was Jim Conover and Orville Jones, Homer Powell, and Grace DeVaney and . . . oh, Inez Kelly and Marie Latta. They were some of the people that I remember real well as teachers there. And then the students . . . let's see, how'd you ask that question?

MP: I said some of the faculty and . . . particularly the faculty that sticks out in your mind as making some contribution to the school.

PIKE: Well, all of those did. And then there was . . . when I first came there there was a fellow names Wood, Willard Wood. He became a doctor and went to Chicago and got his doctor's degree and stayed in Chicago as a doctor. And he was a good chemistry teacher. He and Jake Maehling were the chemistry teachers there when I first came here. And then there's two or three women teachers that I'd like to mention, because I just thought so much of them. One of them was Miss

PIKE: Moudy, Alice Moudy, who was the art teacher there. And she was one of the boosters for Garfield athletics and everything and would take . . .

MP: She sticks out in your mind as an outstanding individual?

PIKE: Yeah. I tell you, she weighed about 250 pounds; and you hardly ever saw her out of her chair in the class room. But the kids would just crowd around her and she just had them under her thumb. Whatever she said, went with the students. And that was the way all the time she was there! Not just one group, but always. And with the faculty, she was that way. And . . .

MP: I was going to say that some of the names that you have mentioned, of course, are very distinguished names in the educational circles in Terre Haute. Maehlings, of course, the Maehling family has the complex -- housing complex [Indiana State University housing on South Third Street] -- named after them. James Conover, of course, is a household name. DeVaney, there's the DeVaney elementary school [on East College Street]. So, these must have been outstanding individuals.

PIKE: They were.

MP: They made contributions then to the education system.

PIKE: Yes, see, Grace DeVaney was dean of girls and became a principal of Garfield High School. And her sister was principal of a school out on College Avenue, College east there. Can't think now.

MP: Would that be Montrose?

PIKE: No. No, it was . . . Frank Sibrel was principal until it was just done away with.

MP: Thornton?

PIKE: Thornton. Yeah.

MP: Well, before we leave Garfield and we get into the school administration office, were there any high points? Did you have some high points there?

PIKE: Well, I think I would say, yes. One of them was . . . of course, I would say was my bunch of boys that won the Wabash Valley championship that year.

MP: Nineteen /hundred/ thirty-five.

PIKE: Nineteen /hundred/ thirty-five. And then another is the second team that I had in 1924-25. That team played seven games and didn't have a major penalty called on 'em. And that's one of the records, I think. And I tell you that was a good team, too! And off of that team, one of the ends went to the Navy and participated in athletics. He was a small fellow.

MP: Who was that?

PIKE: Herschel House. And the center was Dick Wimer. He played center on the Army team and was the lightest man on the team and the smallest fellow that ever played center for the Army as long as he can remember. Now he's moved back here to Terre Haute and he married Del Humphrey's . . . you know Del Humphrey, don't you? Del Humphrey's wife's sister. And they lived up here just south of the Elks Club.

MP: Obviously if you had some high points, you had some low points, low moments.

PIKE: (laughs) Well, let's see. One, I'll tell you one I was really low. One Thanksgiving Day game I went over to Garfield and opened up - I always went over early -- and went in and we didn't have a Garfield uniform. They'd been all taken, stolen the night before and they were gone! We didn't have any. And I

PIKE: tell you right then I could have fallen in . . .

MP: What'd you do?

PIKE: Well, I called Jim Conover right away, and we got together and decided about the only place we knew we could get uniforms was to go get, or try to get 'em, from Indiana State. And I believe Dave Glasscock was the coach down there then. So, I called him and asked him if we could borrow uniforms to play that game.

And he says, "Well, what's the matter?" And I told him, "Well, I came up here this morning and ours are all gone. I don't know where they are."

MP: Somebody had broken into the . . .

PIKE: Broken into the school and gymnasium and got away with them.

MP: What's the follow-up to that? Did they ever (laughing) find out or did you ever get the uniforms back?

PIKE: Yeah. Yeah. We found them out along the railroad, out northeast of town here. (laughs)

MP: I believe . . . you must have been at Garfield when they opened Memorial Stadium in Terre Haute, were you not?

PIKE: Yeah.

MP: I believe the first time . . .

PIKE: That's the first game.

MP: . . . 1924 or '25?

PIKE: 'Twenty-four.

MP: Garfield and Wiley high schools played the first . . .

PIKE: First game.

MP: I have a picture of that . . .

PIKE: Do you? I have a note in here that that was one of the highlights. The game ended up zero to zero. And we went over for one touchdown, but somebody was offside and they called us offside. (laughs)

MP: So, you . . . so Garfield and Wiley played in the inaugural game of Memorial Stadium, you say in 1924?

PIKE: 'Twenty-four, yeah.

MP: Was that a big occasion?

PIKE: That was a big one.

MP: Because Memorial Stadium was built as a memorial to World War I veterans.

PIKE: That's right. It was a . . .

MP: What do you remember about that?

PIKE: It was a big occasion. Well, I remember the biggest crowd that I've ever seen at a football game, (laughs) you might say, and, of course, the biggest crowd that Terre Haute had had up to that time, and I think maybe it is even yet. And we had Big Ten officials for the game that year. And so, as a result of that, this offside thing was . . . there was no question about it; everybody took it and went right on. But if it had been some local officials or something, I'd have felt sorry for them that . . . I would have wished they called it if it was that way, but we had all these big-name officials and the result was

PIKE: everything went right on. Nobody . . . the attendance seemed to realize that we had officials that knew what they were doing and if they called it that way, they figured that that was it. But that was one of the . . . that game was one of the highlights in my life.

MP: That was a big day then that dedication of the stadium in addition to the game. It's interesting that Garfield and Wiley for many, many years played on Thanksgiving Day.

PIKE: Yeah. Yeah, we played on Thanksgiving Day 'til the Thanksgiving Day game got to be such a cold affair, no attendance. It got to the place we had to depend on the Garfield-Wiley game for enough money to run the athletic program.

MP: Was that why it was changed from Thanksgiving?

PIKE: And that's the big reason that it was changed. We just couldn't afford to carry on the way we did. Because if there was snow or anything, why people wouldn't come. And we had three or four years in a row there there was snow. And once or twice it was really cold out there.

MP: Yes, I know it was. And I attended on that day, but that's the reason why the game was changed from that day -- the lack of attendance and . . .

PIKE: Lack of attendance and financial income, you might say.

MP: I have a question here to ask you, again on your athletic career. Was there an intense rivalry between the local high schools then? I know we had Gerstmeyer and then Wiley.

PIKE: Well, Gerstmeyer was, in the early days, didn't figure very much in the rivalry. It was just Garfield and Wiley. But the night before the Thanksgiving Day

PIKE: game the main thing we always tried to do was to keep our kids (commences to laugh) from going downtown because there'd be some troubles down there. And two or three times it happened that way. And the kids . . . one of our boys went down there the night before. And I don't know whether he got in a scuffle with a Wiley student or just somebody that was a Wiley booster. Anyway, he got the worst end of it (laughs) and he wasn't in very good shape the next day. But I didn't . . .

MP: Well, there was an intense rivalry between the two schools?

PIKE: Oh, yes, it was really . . .

MP: Wasn't /the/ Garfield-Wiley high school /competition/, when it was terminated, one of the oldest, longest-standing rivalries in Indiana high school football? Was that . . . am I right about that?

PIKE: Well, that I . . . football, I expect . . . no, it wasn't because Garfield, see, wasn't built 'til '12. But continuous rivalry -- now if you put it that way, that would probably be because after Garfield was built, there was never any year went by that there wasn't rivalry with football or basketball or baseball.

MP: I want you to comment. You were the football coach at Garfield High School in 1938.

PIKE: Yeah.

MP: I can remember as a youngster going to the . . . we called it the Turkey Day game. Memorial Stadium, there were a lot of people. I believe there was . . . well, I don't recall whether there was snow -- I've been to the games when there was snow -- but that was the ballgame in which the youngster from Wiley High School -- Eddy Wilkerson -- scored . . . Well, I believe the score was 41 to nothing.

PIKE: Forty-one to nothing.

MP: And Eddy Wilkerson scored how many times?

PIKE: Six times, I think.

MP: A phenomenal performance! Do you remember that game?

PIKE: Yeah, (commences to laugh) I sure do! Yes, indeed. That was one of the low spots, you might say -- after the game especially. I wasn't surprised that we got beat that year, but I didn't think it would be that bad. And I think there were some things that happened a week or so before that I never did know about 'til years later, that some of the boys were having a good time when they shouldn't (laughs) maybe.

END OF TAPE 1

TAPE 2

MP: Before we leave your 23 years at Garfield, I take it there's something else you want to mention?

PIKE: Well, I'd just like to mention some of the other boys that I think deserve mentioning. For instance, there was . . . Paul Humphrey was '34, was the center. He came to Garfield at about 145 pounds or something like that and was a leader for the team and went to Purdue and developed to be a big man, you might say. He got up to be around 200 pounds and played center on Purdue. Later, from Purdue he went to professional football, and he decided when he finished Purdue that he wanted to be a doctor. And then he played professional football to get money enough to pay his medical expenses through Indiana University. And he played and he would practice football down at Indiana University and go to Pittsburgh -- Pittsburgh I believe it was -- on the weekend and play football with a pro

PIKE: fessional team and get his money and come back. /He would spend/ another week at Indiana and /then/ go back. And he did that for two or three years, working his way through medical school at Indiana University.

MP: This is the same Dr. Humphrey that later became a well-known doctor here in Terre Haute, a urologist?

PIKE: A urologist. He's still . . . well, he just retired this last year.

MP: Who were some other names that stick out as students and you've followed their careers?

PIKE: Well, there's another one, Dr. Donn Gossom, as a basketball player. He is one that I think deserves some mention. Dr. Zwerner went through Garfield, but he didn't play football or basketball. And, gosh, I had a list of them down here somewhere that I wanted to mention.

/George Van Bibber played three years at Garfield. He was a good-sized boy and a real competitor and a leader. He went from Garfield to Purdue where he played 3 years. He received several honors. He played in the east-west game his senior year. In the Navy he was a physical fitness leader.7

Rex Herbert was another one. And Harp Ward was . . .

MP: What did Rex Herbert do?

PIKE: Rex Herbert was halfback. He was on that championship team and he went to Chicago and had a real good job with some firm in Chicago. He lived up there and he just died this last summer.

And, well, one other . . . I had that list so I could refer to it. Here it is.

PIKE: Bill Nichols was quarterback on another one of our teams. And he was a little fellow but he was a scrappy one and did a real good job.

And another fellow right along with him was Buss Albin. You know who he is, don't you?

MP: No, I don't.

PIKE: The Hoosier Auto Club man here at Terre Haute. He had one short foot -- short leg -- and he played quarterback on the team and really did a very good job and made his letter. I always thought a lot of him, you know.

MP: These were fellows that played for you?

PIKE: Yeah. And then there was one fellow, Tommy Herbert, weighed 111 pounds. And he played quarterback on our football team and was our kickoff man. And only weighed 111 pounds. He could kick that football better than anybody else on the team, and we played Clinton that year and they had Antonini. You've heard of Antonini. And this Antonini tried to clip him or get him out, and he was just clever enough to sidestep him and Antonini hit his shoulder and knocked his shoulder out of place. (laughs) And Antonini went over to the sideline and his mother -- here's the way, why those people in Clinton -- his mother came over to him and said to him . . . one of the boys that was there heard it and told me about it. /He/ said she come over, she said -- I can't remember what she called him, but she called him by his first name -- she said, "If you get back in there, you wallop those boys!" (laughs heartily) Boy, she was . . . she was really a booster.

MP: Are there any other names you want to mention?

PIKE: Well, let's see. Denny Cummings was another outstanding one; "Eck" Wheeler, Babe's brother; and

PIKE: Bob Wheeler was also a member played basketball. Andy Grant. Andy Grant was one of the fine football players and he came from the family down here in the Valley. Fact of the matter is, they didn't have anything and his father didn't have a job, and they didn't have enough to eat. I found it out. So, I took him home with me once in a while /to/ get him a good meal and got some other people to do the same thing. And he developed into one of our outstanding players. He played center the first year and played in the backfield naturally because he could do anything, you might say.

MP: What did he do then later? Did he . . .

PIKE: Well, he played professional football later. And his brother and he had a firm in St. Louis. And I can't think what it was they did now -- what they made -- but they made something. And they made a good living. And there was a boy names Howard Vogel. /He/ was an outstanding tackle. And he was on /the/ team . . . the next year after that championship team.

And a good . . . oh, here's the boy I want to /mention/. Bruno Beckish, the best high school football player I think I have ever worked with.

MP: Bruno Beckish.

PIKE: Bruno Beckish. And you know what happened? Poor boy had appendicitis or something and /doctors/ had to operate on him, and he died on the operating table in his junior year.

MP: Here in Terre Haute?

PIKE: Here in Terre Haute and already Knute Rockne was down here looking after him.

MP: What was so outstanding about Bruno?

PIKE: Nobody could catch him when he once got loose.

MP: Oh, he was a back?

PIKE: He was a back and he could sidestep and he could intercept passes. I think . . . he was just an outstanding football . . .

MP: Do you feel, Earl, had he lived he would have been a . . .

PIKE: Oh, if he'd lived, he would have been another George Gipp.

MP: He would have . . . he had planned, then, to go to Notre Dame, did he?

PIKE: He planned to go to Notre Dame.

MP: Who else comes to mind?

PIKE: Well, let's see. Another one /who/ went to Indiana State here is Don Modesitt and Del Humphrey. They attended Indiana State. And let's see. Bob Hammond.

Oh, another thing, here's another one of the low places. I went to Clinton to referee a basketball game on Friday night. We had a game the next day on Saturday . . . no, let's see. Yeah, I think. And I came back home after refereeing that game and here was the captain of my team, Ed Donnelly /captain of the G.H.S. football team/, sitting on my front porch. And I said, "What in the world are you doing out here at this time of night?" He said, "Well, Garwood Tucker's in the hospital. He got a broken neck this afternoon in practice." And I didn't know that anything had ever happened to him. But he and another boy were practicing what they'd do to somebody else, you know. And he just accidentally got hit just right and broke his neck. And when I got home . . . well, I got going, went to the hospital. Found out how they had the doctor there, and he thought there was a possibility

PIKE: that they could take care of it. He came back the next day and he studied the x-rays of that boy's neck for something like, I'd say, two or three hours before he did any operation. And when he went in, he went down in through the boy's throat in to his neck back there. And some way he got his hand or some instrument or something in there and got at that fractured spot just exactly right, and the boy came out of it. And /the boy later operated the "Tucker's Steak House," near the stadium.

MP: Yes.

PIKE: That's the boy. Now, that was a dark spot for me for a while.

Then there was this Paul Sabonya that I mentioned, that was a McMillan award winner. And Don Smith was on the last team I coached. But he really got credit for being with Dischinger. But Dischinger was the head coach and I was assistant to Dischinger /his first year at Garfield/.

MP: Then Donas Dischinger succeeded you as football coach?

PIKE: Yeah. Um hm.

MP: If there are not any other names, let's move on.

PIKE: O.K.

MP: You left Garfield after 23 years work with the city school administration -- the office which was located on the site of the new Vigo County Public Library.

PIKE: Right.

MP: And who was the superintendent of city schools?

PIKE: Wayne P. Watson.

MP: And I guess the obvious question to ask you is why and how did you leave Garfield to work for the city administration after all of these athletic experiences.

PIKE: (laughs) It was not an easy decision, I'll promise you that. And my wife and I talked it over for several hours about whether we'd change or not because I loved to work with the boys and I think I got along pretty well with them. And I finally decided that a person should advance when he feels like there's a chance of advancement and the salary difference was really the thing that made the difference. And we decided that I'd go down there, and I'd have a 12-months job instead of an 8- or 9-months and we'd be better off in the long run.

MP: Well, what did you do at the school administration?

PIKE: School administration. I was assigned as director of administrative studies and that included a lot of things. In other words, I was the superintendent's representative in the athletic program, in guidance and physical education. And one of the things that I had to do on that job was to secure supply /substitute/ teachers for the city of Terre Haute. And some days, we didn't have enough supply teachers to fill the openings that came when we had a seige of the flu or something of that kind.

MP: Who enticed you to go to the city administration office? How'd that come about?

PIKE: Well, Mr. Watson was a former teacher at Gerst-meyer High School. And I knew him and he knew me. When he got this job as superintendent . . . I don't know how or why he wanted to ask me to come with him but I guess he just thought I might be a good fellow to help him and all and I'd /sure/ try. And I'd always worked and held what I call high standard of

PIKE: activity and morals and all, and so he just encouraged me to come down /to the central office/. Then, I figured out that probably I'd never have another chance to advance as much as that /and remain in Terre Haute/ so I chose to take the job.

MP: Mr. Watson succeeded George Carroll as superintendent.

PIKE: Yes.

MP: What kind of an individual was Mr. Watson?

PIKE: Well, Mr. Watson was a little different from most people; yet he was a good school man. He was one who wanted things to go just so-so and if it didn't work out that way, he didn't have much patience with you. And he wanted everything to go more or less his way or the way he had planned it. And as long as everything went just right, why he was fine to work with and to work for and I enjoyed working with him. We got along real well.

MP: You worked in the school administration office from '46 to at least . . .

PIKE: 'Sixty-five.

MP: What kind of problems did you encounter in those years moving from Garfield to city administration?

PIKE: Well, problems . . . first of all was getting acquainted with the change from the kind of work, working with adults rather than boys and girls. That was the hard thing for me to do because I worked with the kids and we always got along fine and I sort of expected adults to come along with it. But I found out that didn't work that way sometimes, that they had their own ideas and some of them were not as true to work with as the boys and girls. And we had people that would do things that would make it hard on you rather than to help you out sometimes.

MP: It was no easy job then?

PIKE: No, it wasn't an easy job. I was fortunate in having a couple of girls who had been in the office a year or two before to be my secretary and helper -- or Wayne's helper and my secretary. I soon learned to depend on them quite a lot in getting the viewpoints of the other people and the city as a whole. And that way I was able to go ahead and do my job, I think, pretty well.

MP: What condition did you find the city school system in when you went into the main office?

PIKE: Well, the system was a very satisfactory one under most conditions. I found out that . . . the second year, I think it was, that I was there was the first time the city school budget ran over a million dollars. Other than that, I thought, gee whiz, that's an awful lot of money. But from then on, it just kept getting bigger and bigger all the time. And now it's . . . well, a lot bigger than that.

MP: Who were some of the people that you worked with in the school administration? Besides Mr. Watson.

PIKE: Well, Loring Halberstadt was there at that time. And then others that . . . Darrow . . . what was his first name?

MP: Was it Norman Darrow?

PIKE: Norman Darrow! And Miss Feuquay was the director of the elementary education program, and she was a dandy. And then following her, was Miss Femeyer. She was a good one and a nice person to work with. And then, of course, a little later on Jake Maehling came down there and Jim Conover came in there, Alex Menestrina and Carl Riddle and Harry McCullough.

MP: These were in the later years though, after consolidation came about?

PIKE: Yeah. Well, they were there during consolidation time. They were there near the end of my . . .

MP: What kind of . . . if you will reflect for just a moment, what kind of thorny issues were you involved in?

PIKE: Well, I tell you. There were times when a lot of people wanted /their children to attend a school other than the one in the district where they lived⁷.

MP: Would you say a lot of . . . do you mean faculty or students?

PIKE: Students. Parents would say, "I don't want my boy to go to Garfield. I want him to go to Gerstmeyer," we'll say, because they could take mechanical arts there or something of that kind. We had districts and that was one thing that I was responsible for -- keeping the districts balanced and keeping people in the right districts. And sometimes I found I had a (laughs) real job on my hands.

Another time, I had this situation. This was in the grade school -- we had boys that were twins. They were at Fairbanks school, I believe it was. And one of them was a talkative youngster and could do everything, and the other wouldn't do anything but follow his brother. The parents /were worried about it⁷. Somebody talked to them and /suggested that/ they ought to separate the boys /in school⁷, get them in different places so the other boy would start being on his own. And so they came down to me and told me what they wanted, and I come to find out that they had just transferred from Northside church down to First Baptist church and they were in the Baptist church downtown. So, I got in touch with some people down there to find out about these boys. And every time I got /information⁷ about it, I found out that what they had said seemed to be true. They wanted to get the boys separated to see if they couldn't get

PIKE: both of them to carry on like they should instead of one just being a follower all the time.

So, I told them, "I'll see what I can do." I came back /to the office/ and I went to talk to Mr. Watson. I got his O.K. first. And I told him about the situation and all. And he said, "Well, I think it's worth trying."

We changed the one boy over to another school. I forgot now which one of them went to the other school. But I think the parents took the responsibility of getting him over there and back. And, by golly, it worked. And that was one thing that I got done that I thought I did the right thing. And the two boys . . . the boy that was the follower now is a teacher in southern Indiana somewhere; and his brother was killed in World War II, I guess it was.

MP: Do you remember their names?

PIKE: Foltz.

MP: A minute ago you mentioned that you had difficulty with the substitute teachers.

PIKE: Yeah.

MP: Why was that such a problem?

PIKE: We just didn't have enough teachers, enough people that were willing to go out for \$10 or whatever /the system/ paid. In fact, I think when they started out it was \$6 they paid for a day. Then it got up to \$20 a day and I thought well, I won't have much trouble now. But you know I had to call on my wife to go several times when I couldn't get anybody else to take an opening. Any time a Latin, French or Spanish teacher was sick or out, I had only one other one that I could call on, and then I'd have to call on Florence /my wife/. And she didn't want to go. Finally she

PIKE: got so, later on, she didn't mind it.

MP: It was your responsibility then to see that all the schools were staffed daily?

PIKE: Yeah. In those days I had that responsibility. The principals would call me of a morning and say, I need a teacher for so-and-so in math. And I'd have, say, four math teachers. Well, maybe three of them were busy, already busy, and the other one was on a trip somewhere. Then I didn't have anybody /qualified/, so I'd have to scout around and pick out somebody /and/ see if I could get them to go just sit in the classroom. And sometimes I could find somebody and take care of /the opening/. But that carried on until . . . close to the time we reorganized the schools. Then they changed that idea to the principals' job; each school principal had the job of getting his own.

MP: You brought up the reorganizing of the schools. That occurred in the early 1960s.

PIKE: Yeah. Well . . .

MP: 'Fifty-nine, 'sixty -- somewhere in there.

PIKE: Yeah. Um hm.

MP: Prior to that we had two systems operating here. The county school system had a superintendent, and I believe the township trustees ran the school system at that time.

PIKE: More or less, yes.

MP: And then we had the city school system. And then there was a movement in the state of Indiana to merge schools, to consolidate.

PIKE: Right.

MP: What are your recollections of that?

PIKE: Well, my recollections . . . one of the main things is that there were pros and cons, of course. Some people didn't want it changed and other people wanted it changed because they could get advantages of equipment and buildings and things of that kind. But the . . . one thing, another thing was the racial question. There was a problem there. Well, in the city schools we had that . . . Wayne Watson . . . there's where he was really smart I think. He got . . . you know Allen Parks, the colored principal that used to be at Washington school? Well, he got Allen Parks and two or three other leading colored people and told them what was coming up. And told them about getting this thing worked out so we wouldn't have a big change all at once. And they went along with him. And Terre Haute, when it came time to transfer, change over, the people in various schools, we didn't have any problem at all, you might say. It worked out real well.

MP: Because you had planned ahead for it?

PIKE: He planned ahead for it. He had it planned. We worked it out. We had it planned and he did a lot . . . most of it. But I know when there was a problem come up about that that affected a change of colored boys of going to one school or the other, why he would get in touch with Parks or somebody else and when the time came that we had to make a change, it worked out and we made the change. We transferred them to different places and it worked all right.

MP: Earl, the consolidation was really a significant development in the educational structure.

PIKE: Right. It was.

MP: It resulted in a number of schools being closed, consolidating. And we built the bigger schools as opposed to the neighborhood schools. What are your feelings, Earl?

PIKE: Well, I just . . . I think we traded the smaller community schools for a bigger school that's more the type of computer schools now. In other words, there isn't the closeness of teachers, faculty and students that there used to be, and there's something we lost in that. The kids nowadays don't really know who their teachers are, really, and don't understand them as well. And I really think that we'd be better off if we had schools about half as big as what they are. Bigger than what they used to be, of course, would be all right. But I think when they go up 2,000 or better, then it's . . . really it's too big and the students become a number and the teacher becomes a math teacher, or that's about all they know about them.

MP: What about the educational advantages that . . .

PIKE: Well, the educational advantages in most cases, I think, is improved because the schools . . . it is improved over the small schools quite a lot, because they didn't have money and the facilities to get into the . . . we'll, say the chemistry or physics equipment, technical materials and things like that that they have now /in the big schools/. But a boy or a girl in these schools now can have a chance to go through there and they won't know half the kids in school and won't know but just a few of the teachers that he has (laughs) in his own classes. He just doesn't really get acquainted with them.

MP: You were a member of the city school administration at the time of consolidation. Were you actively involved at that time in the movement?

PIKE: Yes. Yes, I was. One of the things I had to do was help with surveys to decide whether we'd dismiss an area or close a school or change the district so that more people would go to this school or more people to that school and fewer here and fewer there. Then when we come into the larger school, one of the big problems is the bus situation. And that was really a problem. And it still is, I think.

MP: It's interesting I think a while back in the interview we talked about transportation, how kids got to school and how your teams traveled and all. And now, with the school setup that we have today, we've run into a transportation situation of a different sort. We have a bus fleet and many students are bused several miles from their homes.

PIKE: Yeah.

MP: Looking back now, Wayne Watson, of course, then left as superintendent and you worked under other superintendents.

PIKE: Max Gabbart. Max Gabbart followed Wayne. Max Gabbart was . . .

MP: What kind of an individual was he?

PIKE: Well, Max Gabbart was morally one of the finest fellows you ever met, and he carried through that kind of a thing in his school programs. He was interested in developing and helping students in any way that we could. But there was a problem of finances to a great extent, but I don't think he was quite as close on finances as Mr. Watson was. In other words, he had a little bit more to work with than Mr. Watson did. And he had larger faculties. The schools were bigger in that, and they were developing to make a real good school or a school that was just a school (laughs) you might say.

MP: Correct me if I'm wrong on this. Did Mr. Gabbart . . . I believe he left here . . . he left for Chicago?

PIKE: Yeah.

MP: But he did not, I take it in later years or one of the reasons he left, he did not get a vote of confidence, did he, from the school board?

PIKE: Well, that's right. It ended up that way.

MP: Why was that? Do you have any thoughts on that?

PIKE: Well, he wouldn't go along with some of the school board members, (laughs) I think was one of the problems. And then when they first started this reorganization, he wasn't very strong for the reorganization of the county school program and the city schools.

MP: Who was the guiding light? Who pushed through reorganization? There was a vote taken; of course, it was voted in, wasn't it?

PIKE: Yeah, yeah.

MP: Well, who were some of the . . . people out front?

PIKE: Well, there were politicians, some of them I think. Let's see. Who was the mayor then?

MP: Ralph Tucker was the mayor.

Ralph Tucker, I think was one who wanted bigger and better schools, as it went. And then the county schools, according to what I heard and what Mr. Gabbart said, a good number of them had been going down. They weren't gaining in attendance and they were having trouble making ends meet financially and with the student bodies down. The county schools, some of them were for it and some weren't. Now, the men that were really for it, I'm not sure now who they were, but I know there were some of them that didn't think they ought to go in. But the township trustees and all I think had something to do with it because the schools were becoming too expensive for them with only township money.

MP: So there was a money problem then as there is today?

PIKE: Yeah. It was . . .

MP: I was just thinking that now with the school

MP: system that we have, you live just a few . . . well, practically a stone's throw from where Garfield stood and there isn't a . . . there's not a sign of Garfield High School left, I believe. The old gymnasium is still there.

PIKE: The gymnasium's still there. But it's a print shop now.

MP: But it was built later. But there isn't anything at all of the old building.

PIKE: Of the original, no. No.

MP: Of the original.

What kind of a (laughs) . . . being so close to that scene and having spent most of your educational life in this community, do you have any particular thoughts as you go by, you know? What comes to mind? The school isn't there any more and . . .

PIKE: I've always said I hated to see Garfield disposed of. The school building was basically still good, I think. But I know there were parts of it that reached the point where it had to be repaired. And if you go in to repair a building of that kind with the increase in attendance like there was, there had to be some more building done to take care of it, and there just wasn't enough people that would back that kind of thing to do it. Now, back earlier . . . did you ever know about the doghouses that they had?

MP: No.

PIKE: Well, back of the building there, they used to have either five or six buildings big enough for a classroom, and they had classes out there because the building wouldn't take care of them. And then we had . . .

MP: You called them doghouses.

PIKE: Doghouses.

MP: Why?

PIKE: (commences to laugh) Well, because of the way they were built, I think. They were all just square buildings with a door in front . . .

MP: The sophisticated term for that is "a mobile classroom," is it not?

PIKE: Well, it wasn't a mobile classroom. It was just built, right there on . . .

MP: (laughs) When was this? This was in . . . before the consolidation?

PIKE: Oh, yes! Yes. Back . . . do you remember when Garfield had a fire?

MP: No, I don't.

PIKE: Well, now there's another one of the points that I was talking about. But the night that the fire . . .

MP: When was this?

PIKE: It was along in the early '30s. Or maybe it was late '29 . . . early '30s, I think.

And I was making a talk at a Plainfield High School alumni meeting over at Plainfield. And just before it was time for me to start talking, I had a telephone call and one of the teachers came and got me -- they said, "They want you on the telephone, a telephone call from Terre Haute." And I went back in to the telephone, and it was a girl who was in high school that I lived where I roomed. Her parents . . . I was rooming with her parents, and she told me about the fire and that Garfield would be out of whack for the

PIKE: next few days. /I/ came back /to Terre Haute/ the next morning. Mr. Zimmerman called me in; he said, "You're in charge of getting the places for high school classes to meet." Now, we had these bungalows out there then. So, we used those -- had them all full all the time.

MP: Bungalows? Is that the doghouses?

PIKE: The doghouses. And then my responsibility . . . well, they had an open space at the school over here on Lafayette Avenue -- you know, the north . . . what's the name?

MP. Is that the Rankin School?

PIKE. No. Not Rankin. Here in the city.

MP: The Lange School?

PIKE: Lange School! And they were . . . well, we started in. That was when we had a bunch of rooms over there we could get rebuilt and fix up and so we had them /arranged for classes/.

When we got through with that, we didn't have enough rooms. So we got rooms in Maple Avenue church and down at Collett School. We had a group that had to go clear down there. /They traveled quite some distance to class. But they made it./

MP: Well, this fire did extensive damage then?

PIKE: Yes.

MP: Do you remember where it was?

PIKE: Well, it developed around the auditorium. The students were having a class play and they were up there practicing the play. And somebody left a match or cigarette or something that started the fire.

MP: What year was this?

PIKE: I wish I could tell you. I tried to find it in this Benny /Benedictus, the high school yearbook, and I think they must have tried to keep it out of the . . . seniors . . . Probably, 1934, according to Jim Conover.

MP: But the school then was rebuilt or remodeled?

PIKE: The school was remodeled and then . . . new floors and in some spots windows and things like that had to be removed and replaced. And the auditorium was completely rebuilt. So, that was a trying time for us for a week or two there.

MP: We've spent several hours here reviewing . . .

PIKE: (laughs) It's gone rather quickly for . . .

MP: What do you miss most?

PIKE: Well, to tell the truth about it, I miss the teaching of the children, the youth. That was one thing that I loved to do and the coaching, of course. I'll tell you when I quit coaching is when the boys got so they hit me and I felt like my teeth were all coming out.

MP: You mean on the practice field?

PIKE: Yeah. I couldn't coach a football team and a basketball team without getting out there and showing them and demonstrating for them to get them to do what I wanted them to do. But some people, they just come back and tell 'em and have somebody else do all . . .

MP: Working with these young people gave you a lot of satisfaction, didn't it?

PIKE: Yes. I got satisfaction, especially when . . . like, for instance, this Paul Humphrey case. He came from a very ordinary family and they had a hard time sometimes. But there's Del and Paul and Jim. And those kids have all come through and are now outstanding members of our society, you might say -- two doctors and one who's a manufacturer of athletic equipment.

MP: Let me ask you this. You coached for a number of years . . . how many years actually were you involved in coaching?

PIKE: About . . .

MP: Nineteen /hundred/ twenty-two until . . .

PIKE: Nineteen /hundred/ twenty-two to nineteen /hundred/ forty . . . you might say, forty-two.

MP: That's a number of years. Yet, I'm going to ask you something here, and tell me now frankly, what . . . there're some coaches today -- as a matter of fact, most coaches today -- say, if I were to ask them what was your coaching record in football, total coaching record for the number of years, could you tell me?

PIKE: I couldn't tell you my total coaching record. I'll tell you what happened. When Dischinger came there, I had a record of everything up to that time, and I turned it over to him and he lost it. And I've tried to find places where I could get all that record back before I left Garfield, and I never was able to do it.

MP: But you told me before we started this interview that you couldn't recall your won-and-lost record. Why?

PIKE: Well, to tell the truth about it, my won-and-lost record didn't mean too much to me as far as win and loss was concerned. It was whether we enjoyed playing

PIKE: the game. And the boys had a good time playing the game even though they lost. It was all right with me, you know.

For instance, one time we went to Oblong, Illinois, to play a game. And it's the first time I ever saw a fog so thick that you couldn't see a team playing football out on the football field. But the last half of that ball game what went on on the field, the coaches didn't know. They couldn't see it from the sidelines. And we got beat . . . we were ahead . . . no . . . yes, they were ahead of us 7 to 6 or something like that. I don't remember just exactly the score, but they were ahead of us. That fog came up, and I know we could have beaten them if we'd had a chance to play 'cause we had a better team. But I didn't know it was going to be a fog thing and we didn't take advantage of the first half. When we came home and the boys were down so much, but you know it didn't bother me at all. I felt like that was just one of those things that you had to face, and we should try to enjoy it. I remember once there was Paul Pauline, another fellow I wanted to mention. He was an end, a substitute. And someone came off the field. A boy came out and I sent Paul in. And he asked, "Well, where do I go, Mr. Pike?" (laughs) And I said, "Ask the boy who came out." And he told Paul, he says, "Well, about ten yards down this way and go right straight across the field."

MP: The fog was this thick?

PIKE: Oh, it was . . . you couldn't see anything.

MP: When was this?

PIKE: Well, this was along in the . . . that's one thing I was going to look up. I haven't and I forgot that. I've got a Benny upstairs; I'm sure it has that story. It was along about . . . let's see. Who were some of the boys? Pauline . . . Well, it was in the late '30s.

MP: But the game was played?

PIKE: Yeah.

MP: In this very heavy fog? Well, what kind of a transportation problem was there?

PIKE: Oh! I didn't get home 'til three o'clock in the morning.

MP: You traveled by bus?

PIKE: By bus, yeah.

MP: And this, I take it, was difficult.

PIKE: Um hm.

MP: But the game was played anyway.

PIKE: Yeah. Just had to take it slow.

Now, that was a trying experience you might say. But it was one that you were glad to get over with.

MP: The reason I asked you the question about your won-and-loss record was because there is so much emphasis on it today.

PIKE: Yeah.

MP: There are coaches who have been coaching for a number of years now, whether they be pro or college or high school, that can just instantly tell you, right now, what their record is.

PIKE: Yeah. That's one of the things that they all . . . well, I had this record . . . my record . . .

MP: That never impressed you?

PIKE: Never bothered me. I didn't think anything about it 'til . . .

MP: I'm going to ask you about three or four people that come to mind and you give me your impressions of them. These were people I know that you knew and that were colleagues of yours -- not necessarily Garfield but in the city.

Vane / "Rusty" Rutherford? He was a . . .

PIKE: "Rusty" . . .

MP: . . . fine coach at Wiley.

PIKE: . . . well, "Rusty" Rutherford, I knew him before he ever came to Wiley. He was coach at Sullivan. And we'd played football against one another a few times. And we always had . . .

END OF SIDE 1

TAPE 2-SIDE 2

MP: All right. The cassette ended ahead of me. I was going to ask your recollections of some individuals who were prominent during your period in high school athletics in the city.

"Rusty" Rutherford?

PIKE: "Rusty" Rutherford was a coach at Sullivan when I first knew him. And we battled it out quite often, and I think we had an edge on him as far as that was concerned. But I considered him a real fine fellow, a friend and a fellow who takes athletics as an important part of the school program. He wanted to have the program morally straight and everything like that. And like at Garfield, some years he had some pretty good boys and teams and other years /he/ didn't have the talent to do. But that didn't bother him too much. He just went ahead and coached them just as . . . very much the same style as I. And today we get together and have a good visit every so often.

MP: In later years there was a fellow coached football at Wiley, Ted Fehring?

PIKE: Ted Fehring. Well, Ted Fehring, I knew his father and his brother. And now Ted was an excellent football coach. And he was one of the fellows that came along at the time when big coaching began to be it. And he had, in my opinion, he had the idea that winning the game was what you had to do, whether the boys worked out. And he did. He won the games. In other words, he was the first coach at Wiley that got my record going the wrong way. And I give him credit for it. He was a good coach. He knew what he was doing, but . . .

MP: His philosophy was different than yours?

PIKE: His philosophy was . . . I think was . . . more . . . well, as I see it, as we go back I still think it was . . . the main thing was just to win the ball game. And he did a good job.

MP: What about a fellow that coached at Gerstmeyer by the name of Del Clements?

PIKE: Del Clements. Del Clements was one of the in between type. Del Clements played basketball on the Crawfordsville team that won the state championships back in his day in high school.

MP: Would that . . . are you talking about 1911?

PIKE: Back in there somewhere.

MP: When supposedly that team was coached by Dave Glascock.

PIKE: Well, that could be! I don't know.

But he played with and worked with . . . oh, the Purdue coach -- Lambert, "Piggy" Lambert! "Piggy" was

PIKE: another outstanding coach. And because of his record to win ball games and all, I think he got to be coach at Purdue and carried on real well there. And I played against his teams when I was in college.

MP: Clements coached football at Tech?

PIKE: Yeah.

MP: Gerstmeyer.

PIKE: And Clements and I battled it out quite often, but we had some good times. He was a fine fellow to work with and he . . . maybe . . . Well, he didn't have as good a setup at Gerstmeyer in those days as they did toward the end of the Gerstmeyer years. For instance, here's what he had to do. He kept the football equipment in the basement of his house over there where he lived just off of . . . on Locust Street, I believe it is. Was it Locust Street? It was a block north of Gerstmeyer -- 3rd Avenue.

MP: Gerstmeyer High School -- again, I don't know the date on this. But it actually came into being, did it not . . . was it just slightly before or after you arrived at Garfield in '23?

PIKE: Well, it came in but it was just a technical school and became a high school the next . . . about . . . oh, let's see. By golly, maybe it was . . . just about . . . I think it was a year after I came here.

MP: Prior to that it was . . . do you remember it as the old Rose Polytechnic . . .

PIKE: Two-year school.

MP: But it was the forerunner of Rose Poly, wasn't it?

PIKE: Well, no, it took over the building Rose Poly left.

MP: Oh! All right. I'm sorry.

PIKE: And they had . . . at first it was just a two-year school, you know, with a technical program. And then it became a four-year high school, and Guy Stantz went from Wiley (he was the coach at Wiley) and he went as principal at Gerstmeyer. And then it started as a four-year school.

MP: So, Gerstmeyer, like any other struggling school, it sort of . . .

PIKE: Just developed.

MP: Developed, yes. Well, then, of course, later, Gerstmeyer, Fred Wampler?

PIKE: Fred Wampler. Well, Frederick Wampler started to school at Garfield. He had a bad hernia and when I found it out, I wouldn't let him play. I didn't think it was right for him to play, but he decided he'd play down at Gerstmeyer. He went down there and he got an operation or something, got straightened out pretty good, and became an outstanding football player and coach at Gerstmeyer. But he was a very good football player and a good prospect, but I was afraid to use a boy like that. And I wouldn't. Now that may be one of the things . . . for instance, Sharpe or one of those fellows like that, why, /if they/ had him with the ability he had . . . no, I don't think they would have made any opposition to his playing at all. They'd just take him right anyway. But I was just afraid something would happen to him. And I didn't want to be responsible for it. And I told him that and he left Garfield and went down to Gerstmeyer.
(laughs)

MP: In the '30s and '40s many of the high school football games were played at what we called the City Athletic Field.

PIKE: City Athletic Field, at Gerstmeyer.

MP: The course adjoined Gerstmeyer High School.

PIKE: Um hm. Yeah. They played down there in the mud bowl, some fellows have said. I remember we played Crawfordsville down there one day, and I was over talking to the Crawfordsville coach while /his boys/ were getting dressed /after the game/. We were going back to Garfield to dress, you know. And I looked up and I saw a bunch of Garfield boys out there, and they were just a running and a /sliding in the water and mud/. They had a marker out there, and they'd dive into that hole of water and see which one could slide the furthest. (laughs)

MP: On the football playing field?

PIKE: (continuing to laugh) On the football field. And this coach from Crawfordsville, he said, "What the devil are those boys doing out there?" I said, "I don't know but they're sure getting in a mess." And we stood there and watched them and we laughed about it, and I didn't know what to do. They were having such a good time.

MP: Earl, with the two fine schools we have today . . . or three . . .

PIKE: Three.

MP: West Vigo, South Vigo, North Vigo. /There are/ fine facilities at each -- the football field and gymnasiums and all. It may be hard for some people to recollect what kind of school facilities we had back in those days. For instance, Garfield High School didn't have a gymnasium until later years. Gerstmeyer High School, as a matter of fact in the early years when Howard Sharpe went to Gerstmeyer, Gerstmeyer practiced in the Garfield gymnasium.

PIKE: They practiced in the Garfield gymnasium and when we started out -- when I was coaching Garfield basket-

PIKE: ball -- we went to Wiley to practice /and play games/. And Gerstmeyer came up to our place and practiced in the Garfield gym - /the one/ they have now when it was built. And they also practiced down at Wiley some, I'm pretty sure. But it's a problem when you have to do that, the transportation of your kids. /It's tough./

MP: How did you . . . transportation, that must have been a problem.

PIKE: It was. Here's another thing. You never knew whether the boys were going to show up or not. Some boy may start out and something happened and he'd never get there. And then you take them home. You didn't know whether they'd stay home or not. I dropped one boy off of the basketball team -- the championship team I had -- because we were playing in a Wabash Valley tournament and I took him home /after the game/. My brother was out that night, and he knew the boys and he told me that he saw this one boy over at Twelve Points' pool room or someplace. It was after midnight. And I had taken him home so they'd get rest for the ball game the next day. And he told me about it. At first I couldn't believe it. I said, "Well, we'll see what happens tomorrow."

We came back the next day; he got two points in the game. The day before he had scored quite a few. I had two tall boys and he was one of them. And with the two of them in there, one would get the points and then the other would get out and he would slip in and they made a good combination.

But the next day we got beat by /the/ Normal School team that we should have beat 10, 15, 20 points. But this kid . . . I should have taken him out earlier but I didn't.

MP: Was there the pressure on the coaches then that there seems to be now?

PIKE: I don't think so. No. I don't think there was the pressure. And now in this case, this boy when he came out the next practice. We got beat, you know, and we didn't go back to practice at Wiley until Monday after the tournament or maybe it was Tuesday, I don't know. We practiced I think three nights a week down there. And I went down there and who was the last boy to get there? He was it. And we were already practicing, working out. And when he came in, I just blew my whistle. We all sat down on the side. He never got hold of a basketball even. And I made a little speech telling the boys that I was very much disappointed in the way the game went and one of the responsibilities I think for it being that way was the attitude of one of our boys . . . one of our players and one of the boys that didn't do what the rest of you boys did and he let you down. And I don't think that was fair for him to do you that way because you fellows tried to train to do the things right. And I just made a talk, you know. And when I got through, now I says, "The boy whom I'm talking about knows who he is and he can take his equipment and go back down to the dressing room and dress and go on home. And if you want to come back and play basketball sometime, you could see me at school sometime in the next day or two." Well, he was stubborn enough that he didn't come back. And I was stubborn enough I didn't go after him. (laughs)

MP: In your long coaching . . . or in your long school career, is coaching the thing you enjoyed best?

PIKE: Well, coaching I really enjoyed. And I think one of the reasons that I did was when I was in college, on the football team I played every position before I graduated. I played every position at least a half a game. My senior year I had never played end until the last game. And I went to the coach. I said, "Coach, I've played every position on this team but end. Could you let me play end a little while today?"

PIKE: I'd just like to be able to say that I've played every position on the football team during my career in college." And he says, "Well, I don't know." He says, "We'll see how things go." And the second half came along, "Earl, you're playing end this half." (laughs) So, I played end that last half.

Then in basketball, that was the same way. I played every position. And in baseball, I played every position in college but pitch. I didn't pitch in college.

MP: Was it ever your thinking . . . you obviously had good success as a coach.

PIKE: I think I had real good success to the point where I didn't demand a win.

MP: Was it ever your intention to -- somewhere along the line -- to pursue a coaching career at a higher level?

PIKE: No. But I had the chance.

MP: Oh. When?

PIKE: Well, I was invited to come back and coach at Franklin. And I had . . . my wife's brother was vice-president of Western Southern Insurance Company, and he tried to get me to come and make application at the University of Cincinnati. (laughs)

MP: Why didn't you?

PIKE: Huh?

MP: Why didn't you?

PIKE: Because of the pressure and the way they . . . because . . . recruiting, for instance. That's one thing that I . . . well, oh, it's all right I guess.

PIKE: But in those days we played because we enjoyed playing and wanted to have fun; it wasn't a case of recruiting.

You take these boys, recruiters from high schools that go into college now. They don't have any choice as I see it. They gotta go out there and play ball and if they don't play good, they lose out.

MP: Is there too much emphasis today on athletics in schools?

PIKE: In some schools, yes. I think its definitely too much. To the point . . . well, so many of them you have people get into trouble because they do things normally. When we didn't have so much pressure and all, they wouldn't do /get into trouble/ because they weren't that much worried about being able to win, you know. They'd take what they could get and give what they had to and make the best of it. And I think that was my kind of a game.

MP: We've talked for a long time this afternoon in your home here. Is there anything we've overlooked?

PIKE: Well, (chuckling) I think you had a good outline for me to go by and I tried to find /good answers/. I've about . . .

MP: You've covered all your notes, have you?

PIKE: Well, I haven't followed my notes, really.

MP: You never followed them but is there anything? I don't want anything left out.

PIKE: Here just let me see this.

MP: If you'll quickly look over them. I don't want anything left out of your notes.

PIKE: You know I wish I had numbered these questions.

MP: I think I've followed my outline pretty well but if you'll quickly look over your notes here. I don't want anything left out that's significant so will you take just a minute to look over them?

BREAK IN RECORDING

MP: O.K. Go ahead.

PIKE: Well, are you going to ask me?

MP: I was going to ask you. You've been looking over your notes here for just a minute. What is it now? Have you found something that's . . . you want to comment on?

PIKE: Well, I'd say it's Garfield spirit in band, music, boosters' club, dramatics, plays, and all that kind of thing. The spirit was not only in athletics, but it was in the school and everything and everybody had it as a kind of a key or a thing they wanted to reach as the old spirit of 7 to 6.

MP: How'd that come about -- that spirit of 7 and 6?

PIKE: Seven to six? Well, in 1915, I think it was, /In/ the first Wiley-Garfield game or the second -- I'm not sure which it was now -- Wiley was expected to roll over Garfield with ease; and Garfield beat them 7 to 6. And that year /E. Bernard/ Clogston was coach and they didn't have a quarterback. And he had to find somebody for a quarterback. So he went to the study hall at Garfield and looked around and he saw . . . there wasn't very many boys in the study hall, and he says, "Any of you boys in here interested in going out for football?" And this one boy finally raised his hand up like that you know and he /Cloggy/ says, "What's your name?" And he said . . . oh, I could have told you his name but /it will not come now/. "Well," he said, "I need somebody to play quarterback. We don't have a good quarterback on our team. Other than that

PIKE: we got a pretty good team." And so this boy went out . . . Yabe Hicklin was his name. And by golly, he made the team as quarterback. And he was a good one! And they beat Wiley 7 to 6. (laughs)

MP: (laughs) So the spirit of 7 to 6 was born and it's the same Garfield all these years.

PIKE: Garfield. And Garfield has won, I think, three or four games 7 to 6. I know my son was fullback on the team that Dischinger coached and won the last game 7 to 6 over Wiley. And he scored the touchdown. (laughs) But the team won it, so . . .

MP: So the spirit has been alive and . . .

PIKE: Alive. But I fear lost when Garfield was no more. 7

MP: But a similar spirit I take it was at the other schools?

PIKE: Well, I think. Yes.

MP: But maybe not as pronounced as at Garfield?

PIKE: Was not as pronounced as it was at Garfield because Garfield in the very beginning, when it was built, they had a hard time getting a school. And they had people that went out to get the northside school. They developed a community spirit and determination that has always carried through with that Garfield family group. And one of the Garfield boys -- Jock Wilson I believe was his name -- made quite a history out of the spirit of 7 to 6. He organized the team of the drummers, you know, and started it up. And so it just grew. Then when I came to Garfield, it was already developed, of course, and the idea was to keep that ol' spirit of 7 to 6; the spirit of 7 to 6 helps you to win ball games. And by golly, it does! I tell you that spirit'll . . . I had football teams up there that we should have been beaten badly by Wiley, Gerstmeyer and other teams, but

PIKE: they won by determination and good fundamental playing and all or something -- I don't know what it was. But basically and physically they didn't appear to be able to do the job. But they came through. For instance, this 111-pound boy playing quarterback.

MP: What was his name?

PIKE: Tom Herbert.

MP: Tom?

PIKE: Tom. Thomas Herbert, h-e-r-b-e-r-t. And Rex, Rex Herbert was his brother and Harp Ward was his half-brother, and all three of them played football.

MP: I take it they had the spirit or the . . .

PIKE: Yes.

MP: . . . determination that a . . .

PIKE: They had the spirit.

MP: . . . old slug of the team that can't be beaten.

PIKE: Won't be beaten, yeah. That's right.

MP: What other . . . are there any other notes there that you think are significant?

PIKE: Well, . . .

MP: Or have we pretty well covered them?

PIKE: I've got one thing I want to show you.

MP: If there's anything else significant . . .

PIKE: There's one thing in here . . . well, we covered that, the people that I worked with down at the city administration, I mentioned.

MP: Yes.

It's been interesting and we've talked a long time. What . . . as a final and concluding thought, in looking back over your 43 years in the education field, what . . . I know it's given you a lot of satisfaction.

PIKE: Yeah. Well, I'll say that's one way of life, a way of making a living, and it's been a pleasure to have worked in this field of education and with the people whom I have worked with. And I'm sure there are lots of people that have been more active, maybe accomplished a lot more, but they didn't have any more satisfaction out of it than I feel that I've had. Well, the last few years in the city school office, it got to be there were too many people to have to try to please and work with. And then I began to see that things weren't going along as good as they had before, because there were too many people that tried to force you to do things you didn't want to do, you might say.

MP: There've been a lot of changes through the years.

PIKE. Oh, yes, and that's been a change as I see it in the way of the school systems throughout the country, that back in the middle days or my early days we taught school because . . . a teacher didn't make any money, you might say, in those days but he was interested in kids and wanted to teach, was glad to teach; and he taught school because that was the thing he wanted to do. And too many of our teachers I think today teach school because it's a way to make some money. That's what they want to do. They can . . . well, for instance, sixteen hundred dollars a year is not very much money - nowadays especially. But that was a good salary to start off with in my day. And there are teachers I know that started off with five or six hundred dollars a year a few years before.

MP. Are you saying that some of the teacher dedication has been lost?

PIKE: I think so. Teachers . . . I know too many of them, at least or I feel it is too many, teach school now because they think they can get a job and do more or less as they please -- whether they do a good teacher's . . . whether they have a good background or not is a problem. Some of them have and do a good job. Of course, not everybody's that way. But I know several of them . . . well, it's . . . I want to tell you about one fellow that I had as professor in college. If you took his degree book away from him, put him out and ask him some questions on something else, I don't think he could answer the questions. But he just taught from that book /just followed the thesis right through his book/. And there are too many teachers, I think, like that nowadays.

MP: What are your hopes for the future?

PIKE: What do you mean?

MP: What would you like to see for the educational system? You . . . 43 years . . .

PIKE: Well, I'd like to see (laughs) . . . I hadn't thought about it, but I'd like to see people go to college, young people that do pretty good. Most of 'em do pretty well in high school and in elementary education, but there are some that . . . I don't know what it goes back to. Sometimes I think it goes to the fact that too many parents nowadays don't want to see their children have to work for anything or they don't want to punish them for some things that they should once in a while. But I don't think it's the best thing to do to say, "Well, you mustn't do that any more." Then the next time they come around, they do it again. They don't stop them from doing it. That attitude is with them and it goes on into their college and their way of life. And they think being bawled out, that's all that's going to happen. Well, they don't get the idea of teaching children right and wrong, you might say, if you want to call it that.

PIKE: And they leave it to their own desire too much. Well, when one gets out of college nowadays, he has to make a lot of money in order to keep going, you might say. And so they go into teaching. They'll go . . . well, some of them ought to go out and teach a few years before they get a master's degree or a doctor's degree and find out whether that's the thing that they really need or want to do before they get to the place where they can't change. (laughs)

MP: As it pertains to our young people, I'm wondering, has there been that great a change as you have observed in all the years that you have worked with young people, today's young people as opposed to those of yesterday? You mentioned one thing, I take it, that you hinted, at least, that they were a little more permissive than . . .

PIKE: Yes, I think they are and I think that's it. /It/ goes back to our parents. Maybe people like you and I didn't do a good job bringing the kids up to know the thing that was really best, right or wrong. They would slip a little bit here, a little bit there (laughs) instead of following a good philosophy. That's what I wanted . . . a poem that I wanted to show you was the thing . . . speaks the thing better than I can do it.

MP: Did we lose something here in the community? We talked about consolidation sometime ago, but did we lose something when we lost the neighborhood school concept?

PIKE: I . . .

MP: While some neighborhood schools still exist, there seems to be a trend away from that.

PIKE: Yeah. There's a trend away from it; and the reason is because of the financial situation I think, in most cases. Now, for instance, high schools here now as far as equipment for science and laboratory work

PIKE: and gymnasiums, /libraries,⁷ and things like that, why they're outstanding. They've got good ones now, tops for every one. But the number of students that really take advantage of that is . . . I think is low compared to what took advantage and profited by what we had back in those days with somebody that had leadership ability to get the kids to do their best.

I'll tell you one other thing that I did. We had a boy named Bruce Powell at Garfield. And he came to me one day, and he said, "Mr. Pike, do you think we could get some oil from down here at the oil field and bring it up here and make some gasoline?" And I said, "Well, I think we could but I don't know whether it would be wise to do it or not unless you'd be mighty careful, 'cause it could be dangerous." And he said, "Well, I thought I'd go down and get a gallon of crude oil and bring it up here and see if we could build a refining plant and make some gasoline." I said, "Really, I think that would be wonderful, and I'd like to see somebody that could do that and become a manufacturer. It might be /that/ a life's work would come out of it." And he said, "Well, I'd like to do it if you'd help me." And I said, "Well, I'll sure help you and we'll build it right over here on the far side of the lab and we'll not let anybody else monkey with it -- just you. And you don't take any kids in there and fool with it either!" And so we did. We got started and we had to make a lot of changes and everything, and we built a little refinery there and he started; and, by golly, you know he made some gasoline that would work. And guess what he's doing nowadays? He's traveling in foreign countries and developing gasoline plants, refineries . . .

MP: Who is this?

PIKE: Bruce Powell. He lives in California.

MP: So, the pride and satisfaction of a young person who went on to . . .

PIKE: Went on to . . .

MP: . . . gives you pleasure.

PIKE: That's what I (laughs) . . . I really look back to that Garfield lab experience.

Now, here's another one, George Van Bibber -- another fellow who wanted to be a coach. And I tried to help him. He went to Purdue and he became a coach. And instead of starting out in high school like most of us, he went to . . . darn, I can't think of the name of the school now. Michigan, a small school, up in Michigan, after he got out of Purdue and had very good success. And he went from there to the University of Connecticut, as football coach there. And when he got through the years as coach -- retired from coaching -- /he/ became head of the physical education department. /He/ stayed there as a teacher and a director of athletics at the University of Connecticut. And now he lives just off the corner of the University of Connecticut's campus where he has a fine home and all, and he comes back to Indiana about every year. He comes back to the Purdue Homecoming game usually. And he always comes down to spend a day or so with us here. Since my wife's had her trouble, he stays with Paul Moss. You know Paul Moss, don't you? He and Paul Moss played football /in the 1930's/ together up at Purdue. He comes down and stays with Paul now. He comes down here; he came twice this year.

MP: So, that's some of the satisfaction of a long teaching career.

PIKE: Yeah. Now Red McDaniels is another boy that /played football at Garfield/. He was a rough and tough fellow, and if a colored boy said anything cross-ways to him, why he had a fight on his hands right now. He was just that kind of a kid. /He also attended Purdue./

PIKE: And Hugh Mendenhall was another outstanding athlete we had. And Red and Hugh, they each hated the other's (guts) you know. It was just like that. But on the football field, you would never know there was ever anything /questionable/ been between the two of them. But they just couldn't get along outside. They'd practice and work and ol' Red McDaniels would block for Hugh /who would get the score/. He was a good blocker and he loved to win.

MP: What's the value of sports?

PIKE: The value of sports.

MP: Particularly in the educational system.

PIKE: Well, one of the big values, I think, is to get a number of boys -- girls, too, for that matter, and especially now -- that wouldn't otherwise continue in the education field and develop their abilities for teaching and coaching, you might say. I think that's one of the big things that athletics does for the colleges and the universities nowadays, is to get more boys and girls to go. There's one thing I think is wrong. The recruiting system has got to the place where it gets a boy in school; and most of them say that first of all, the boys come there for an education. Well, if he goes to the school and that's his philosophy and follows through on that, that's wonderful and fine. He'll just do well.

But if he's one of these fellows that doesn't care to work in the classroom and wants to go out and play football or basketball or something and get by without studying, then I think it is a sad situation for him.

MP: Is it your feeling that all the many people that you coached through the years, that it was important to do . . . it was important that they do well in the classroom as well as in athletics.

PIKE: Oh, yes! Absolutely!

MP: What is your feeling there?

PIKE: That's one thing that I insisted on /In high school,/ that they had to have their grades up; and if there was any of them that didn't keep up their grades, it wouldn't worry me one bit to say, "You don't play."

MP: One final question, what about this . . . the girls now . . . the athletic . . . the girls now are getting equal treatment in sports?

PIKE: Yes, that's wonderful. My worry is where it's going to end up in the finances of the athletic program. One of these days schools are going, I feel, are going to say, "Well, you've got to go out and make enough money on these athletic contests to pay for it." Well, in high school -- and all schools of course -- it's the school system that furnishes the gym, pays the bills and that kind of thing. And it made a big difference really because the girls wanted to play and desired to make a living by learning and doing.

MP: Earl, on that note we're going to end this interview.

PIKE: Thank you very much for allowing us to come into your home and spend these several hours with you.

PIKE: It's been a pleasure to me and I've enjoyed very much talking with you. I haven't been as coherent maybe in some places as I should have been.

MP: I think you did fine.

PIKE: One thing is that any more I can't remember names and numbers. (laughs)

BREAK IN RECORDING

MP: As a footnote, Earl Pike was elected to the Indiana High School Football Hall of Fame in 1956, and he also is a member of the Franklin College Athletic Hall of Fame.

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